University of Alberta

"The unknown is constant" The Fiction and Literary Relationship of Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller

by

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Abstract

In his 1949 article for Cyril Connelly and Stephen Spender's *Horizon*, "Studies in Genius: Henry Miller," Lawrence Durrell draws out the notion of the 'unknown' as Henry Miller described it in his June 19, 1936 letter to Michael Fraenkel. As the 'unknown' takes shape, Durrell increasingly emphasizes the reader and the gaps, absences, or ambiguities in a text. What I take up as their shared notion of the 'unknown' relates to the textual gaps and ambiguities that prompt the reader to add to the text, to develop it further than it actually goes. But, as prominent gaps, these same missing materials return attention to themselves and thereby to the reader's reading process. This 'unknown' then prompts a significant revaluation of Durrell's and Miller's works. Reading through their published works to the archives of their manuscripts and correspondences, I use their 'unknown' as a way to survey the commonalities and conflicts between their *oeuvres* following the most prominent critical approaches Durrell and Miller have received: their ties to specific geographies, their relationship to Modernism, the nature and role of identity in their works, and their depictions of sexualities. With regard to scholarship, the most significant contribution of the notion of the 'unknown' is the connection it sustains between Durrell and Miller, as a common concern both shared, and as an approach that augments the complexity of their works. Moreover, what makes the commonalities between Durrell and Miller so important in this context is that both put the reader back on his or her own resources—they send us away, on all grounds (the Self, character, locale, sexuality). I contrast their works against their contemporaries and correspondents, most significantly T.S. Eliot, George Seferis, and C.P. Cavafy, as well as their relationship to Friedrich Nietzsche's works.

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Dedication

To my parents, Don and Darlene Gifford

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INTRODUCTION

I had never heard of Lawrence Durrell when I first picked up a copy of his *Avignon Quintet*. With spies and a Gnostic subplot (better than John le Carré any day), what seemed to be a mystery novel caught my eyes as I was leaving work in a bookstore before a snowy long weekend, and at 1300 or so pages for only twenty dollars, it promised me a full three days of reading. After a page, much to my disappointment, I realized it was literature. I was hooked. Durrell's correspondence with Henry Miller followed on my reading list, *The Durrell-Miller Letters, 1935-80*, then Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, Miller also being a new author to me. The two have remained an inseparable pair in my reading habits since.

In the mid-1930s, Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller both made their rather late literary debuts contemporaneously, with Miller publishing *Tropic of Cancer* in Paris in 1934 and Durrell publishing *Pied Piper of Lovers* in London in 1935. Of the two, Miller's was the more auspicious text (Durrell's is yet to be reprinted), but both are important to their *oeuvres*. Their entry on the literary stage of the 1930s then led into a protracted period of continued development and interaction with each other before their artistic reputations became more firmly established after World War II. For both, their continuous correspondence from 1935 until 1980 reflects their shared preoccupations as well as their conflicts over the matters of substance to their writing, and it was frequently through reference to each other that they entered new literary circles, such as Durrell's introduction to the Parisian surrealists via Miller (ie: Andre Bréton, David Gascoyne, Man Ray, and Brassaï); Miller's introduction to the Greek Modernists through Durrell (George Seferis, George Katsimbalis, and Ghika); with Anaïs Nin their interaction with the Black Mountain poets; Miller's meeting T. S Eliot through Durrell; and Dylan Thomas' interaction with both through their Parisian periodicals *The Booster* and *Delta*.[1] Their circles of correspondents and associates overlap, making it difficult to discuss one author without reference to the other, and very often they end up discussing each other through a third party.[2] My coincidental weekend reading was now leading me through a spiraling circle of associates and references, one text pointing me, like a refracting crystal, to others, all diverse in angle and perspective.

That was in 1997, and the biographical materials for both authors were then in a state of flux. New biographies were either appearing or on the horizon—Gordon Bowker's on Durrell was out, and Ian MacNiven's official biography was forthcoming. For Miller, who has received many more biographical treatments, most had appeared but the scholarly critique of confusions between Miller's narrators and himself had not yet become pronounced. Durrell was born in 1912 and raised in India, sent 'home' to England in 1923 for his education by a family that had never seen this 'home,' and then settled in Greece in 1935 until he was evacuated to Egypt via Crete in World War II. After time in Egypt, Cyprus, Argentina, and Yugoslavia, he finally settled in Southern France for the last thirty years of his life. Miller, in contrast, was born in 1891 and raised in New York, the son of immigrants. He eventually moved to Paris in pursuit of his estranged lesbian wife in 1930, and then came to Greece to visit Durrell before escaping to America as war broke out, where he remained mainly in California. This geographical context is reflected in the literary circles both associated with: those of France and Greece especially, with Britain and America playing secondary roles. Yet, no matter which way their refracting crystal of diverse allusions and references led me, I continued to find Durrell's and Miller's works physically and contextually placed beside each other, prompting me to make the obvious step of comparing them for commonalities and differences, especially given their frequent mutual citation and even incorporation of each other's writings.[3]

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[1] Both facilitated other famous literary encounters, such as Durrell's famous introduction of Elizabeth Smart to George Barker (see the Smart fonds at the National Library of Canada)

[2] See, for instance, Durrell and Alfred Perlès' correspondence about Henry Miller, held in the Perlès collection at the University of Victoria's McPherson Library Special collections. This was eventually published in a heavily edited edition as *Art and Outrage*.

Miller wrote and published the *Tropic of Cancer* in Paris while Durrell completed *Pied Piper of Lovers* (his first novel[4]) on Corfu. It was after these debuts that the two first exchanged letters. After reading Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* in 1935, Durrell contacted him from his new home on Corfu.[5] This first letter led to a forty-five year correspondence. It was during this correspondence that Durrell wrote his second novel, *Panic Spring* (set in Greece), under a pseudonym from Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*,[6] after which he wrote his first major literary work while on Corfu: *The Black Book* (1938). Moreover, Miller followed his first books with a trip to Greece to visit Durrell, which would prove very important to his work, and Durrell preceded *The Black Book* with a trip to Paris to meet Miller and the Parisian surrealists. Their most significant periods of mutual influence and agreement during this correspondence are well documented in the biographical studies of both authors, as are periods of separation and criticism of each other's works.[7]

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[3] See, for instance, the conclusion of *The Colossus of Maroussi*, where a letter from Durrell becomes Miller's Appendix and finale to the book (Miller, *Colossus* 243-244)—Durrell's copy of the letter is now held in Mary Honor's donation of Durrell manuscripts and correspondence to McMaster University's William Ready Division of Archives and Research. Likewise, Miller's influence on Durrell's *The Black Book* appears through allusion (compare *Tropic of Cancer* 38 to *The Black Book* 244)

[4] Because Durrell distanced himself from this highly autobiographical first novel and published his second under a pseudonym, *The Black Book* is frequently mistaken for his first novel. This was an error Durrell encouraged.

[5] Durrell's first letter was sent in August 1935, from Corfu, with Miller's response from Paris following on 1 September 1935.

[6] Durrell published under the name of Charles Norden, also calling his sailboat the Van Norden, both drawn from the character Van Norden in Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*.

Robert Ferguson, Miller's biographer, notes "The degree of intimacy the two men had already established in their correspondence" by August of 1937 (252), and in *Inventing Paradise*, Edmund Keeley closely studies their rapport during Miller's visit to Greece while Durrell was a resident there prior to World War II. This rapport continued even while the two lived on different continents and eventually led to Durrell's 1974 lectures at the California Institute of Technology in order to visit with Miller and Nin. Bowker and MacNiven, Durrell's two biographers[8], also point to the break that occurred between the two over Miller's publication of *Sexus* (MacNiven, *Lawrence Durrell: A Biography* 363; Bowker 197). Writing to Miller, Durrell describes the novel in uncompromising terms:

> Received *Sexus* from Paris and am mid-way through volume II. I must admit I'm bitterly disappointed in it, despite the fact that it contains some of your very best writing to date. But my dear Henry, the moral vulgarity of so much of it is *artistically* painful.... But really this book needs taking apart and regluing. The obscenity in it is really unworthy of you.... It's just painful – nothing else, and contributes nothing to what you are trying to do. (MacNiven, *Durrell-Miller Letters* 232-233).

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[7] For a brief overview of the two authors' relationship, see MacNiven's "A Critical Friendship: Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller," which sketches the main moments of disagreement between the two, where their works are most in line with each other, and the significant phases in their friendship and artistic interaction.

[8] An unpublished dissertation that gives a nearly 200 page biography also exists (Todd 6-199), and Michael Haag is currently contracted to complete a new Durrell biography for Yale University Press.

If this commentary had left any questions, they are quickly resolved when Durrell writes five days later "SEXUS DISGRACEFULLY BAD WILL COMPLETELY RUIN REPUTATION UNLESS WITHDRAWN REVISED" (233).

A similar event followed on Miller's subsequent reading of Durrell's *Monsieur* (MacNiven, *Lawrence Durrell: A Biography* 608; Bowker 360-361), such that he mailed Durrell to say:

> Somewhere after the marvelous episode in the tent with Akkad and Ophis the book seemed to fall apart, forgive me for saying so. I can see how the succeeding chapters had purpose and meaning – for you. But, for us? As I look back it seems that these chapters only added complications *and* more *un*intentional mystery. (MacNiven, *Durrell-Miller Letters* 474)

Such incidents suggest the affinities both authors felt for each other's work and their desire for each to live up to the other's aesthetic measures, as if one's successes reflected on the other.

The outline of these, my first readings in Durrell and Miller, provide the background for my approach in this dissertation. While virtually all of the major studies of Durrell and Miller acknowledge the influences each had on the other, as well as the significant confluences in their thinking, an extended comparative study of their works has not yet been completed. It is now over forty years since the first publication of their voluminous correspondence, and George Wickes' 1962 edition has been followed by Ian MacNiven's in 1988, which extends the scope to cover the letters written until Miller's death in 1980—a comparative study is long overdue.

This series of chance encounters with books continued, and in 2000 I traveled to Corfu to present a paper on some problems of identity and knowledge in Durrell's late novels. This was the Greek island on which Durrell had resided for several years and where Miller had visited him. Naturally, my suitcase was packed with copies of their travel writing about Greece, and while I had begun to consider the nature of the city in their novels (Paris, New York, Alexandria, and Avignon), as would seem typical for a study of Modernist authors, I had not considered geography and landscape very much at all. Corfu, the Garden Isle, taught me otherwise. As a typical tourist with defective Greek, I had trusted my texts too much, and Durrell and Miller both seemed to be engaged in a game of trap the tourist by playing with assumptions and names in their travel narratives: Durrell's "Oil for the Saint" and Miller's *The Colossus of Maroussi*. Further returns to this island and a growing interest in its history revealed these texts' manipulation of the reader. They offer the expected exoticism of a luxurious Greek locale that could suit Corfu just as well as Cyprus, but always with some importantly absent context, such as Durrell's moaning over the growing tourist trade (something his magazine story would surely exacerbate), which is oddly combined with praise for tourists' money by a Greek peasant who, even more oddly, is not mentioned in Durrell's correspondence of the time. Her name, Kerkira, is the same as that of the island (Κερκγρα), which is only given the Anglicized 'Corfu' in the text. As such, she only speaks for the island to Greek speakers who can understand the importance of her name. The story then becomes political (and the correspondence further reveals its fictionality), with colonial sites and political events appearing only in coded references that the tourist cannot find without a direct engagement with the locale itself.

This kind of complexity with regard to geography, especially colonial geographies, continued to occupy my attention while I was exploring the more mainstream problem of identity in their works. As with the missing pieces in the landscapes or the decontextualized references to sites that lend an ironic voice to their texts, I began to notice absences with regard to characters. Names were unstable, beginning with Miller's reversal of Mara and Mona in *The Rosy Crucifixion* (published between 1949-1960). For Durrell this went even further, since one character was perfectly capable of becoming another, especially in the late novels that integrate notebook materials in order to blur the distinction between various levels of writing[9]. Looking beyond bald authorial statement that the ego is unstable, something that is common enough throughout both authors' works, I then began to notice typographical errors, such as missing blocks of text in Miller's *Sexus* (1949) that delete the word "one" and leave only a gap in the text (28), or Durrell's refusal to use names at key points, leaving discrete identities blurred. Whatever it was that prompted the gaps and ambiguities I noticed in the books' landscapes also seemed to be recurring in both authors' disruption of stable identities, at least at the level of pronouns and names.

Moreover, the same gaps and absences, missing adjectives and contradictory behaviours, appear around sexual identities. And, sex has been a major concern in both novelists' careers. Durrell's early novel, *The Black Book*, was famously banned, and Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* is, despite the prominence of James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence, probably the most famously banned book of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, Durrell and Miller, who are frequently labeled misogynistic and homophobic, give a shocking amount of sexual ambiguity to characters that either bear the author's own names or are closely associated with the author's own life. In these eponymous characters, the reader finds Miller describing clearly homosexual activities for his protagonist but without any direct references to homosexuality *per se* and without naming these activities. The gap remains fertile for the reader's impositions, though 'impenetrable' in Miller's conceptualization, and critics continue to ascribe oppressive homophobia and heterosexist presumption on the text, despite the contents that were refused the virtue of a name. The title remains an absence. The gaps Durrell and Miller *chose* to include in the artistic framework of the novels have remained unnoticed, which is in contrast with the gaps in an expurgated edition that they were offered but both refused. In such an edition, **** or even   could stand in for terminology the reader would readily supply without complication in the same way that other less marked absences in a text are filled. These holes or ambiguities in landscapes, cityscapes, identities, and sexualities seemed, then, to somehow reflect the reader's agency and his or her ideological predispositions.

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[9] The non-academic reader is even encouraged to notice this, such as with the competing narrative voices of Durrell's 1974 novel *Monsieur*, the first book of *The Avignon Quintet*. In this novel, the chapter "Sutcliffe, The Venetian Documents" introduces a diary that reduces the previous chapter's narrator to a character in another book, while "The Green Notebook" makes the construction of the novel's chapters from notebook sketches explicitly. The novel itself was also sketched in Durrell's green notebooks.

My digging continued, finding Durrell's and Miller's criticism on each other, such as Durrell's "Studies in Genius: Henry Miller" (1949) and Miller's "The Durrell of the Black Book Days" (1959)—Miller even claimed position as "editor" on the dust jacket of Durrell's *The Black Book: An Agon* when it first appeared in 1938[10] through Miller's influence at the Obelisk Press in Paris, and Durrell repaid the favour by editing *The Henry Miller Reader*

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[10] Miller is not only listed under the series title, "THE VILLA SEURAT SERIES," as "Literary Editor : Henry Miller" (the titular reference being to the home Miller shared with Anais Nin in Paris). He appears again in the description of *The Black Book* as "edited by Henry Miller." The proximity of the repetition, with only four lines of text in a dust jacket separating each instance, indicates the importance Miller placed on his position. Nonetheless, his editing or at least copyediting was not close, and an erratum appears on the title page "Owing to a mistake in the pagination, pages 114, 117, 115, 116, 118, should be read in that order."

(1959)[11]. Darley, the protagonist in Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*, is slapped by his lover full on the mouth for considering writing criticism (a warning to scholars). Yet, criticism is a parasitic activity Durrell engaged in heavily, and his discussions of Miller take a 'strong' approach to their subject, turning him and molding the texts into a shape that points to Durrell's and Miller's shared interests. Unlike Miller's 'editing' of *The Black Book*, Durrell excerpted Miller's banned work in order to give a British and American audience access, but also to expressly draw out the continuity of Miller's oeuvre (Durrell, "Introduction" ix-xi). Such continuity reflects Durrell's vision of Miller's *oeuvre* and the pattern he wanted to emerge from the texts.

This is the point at which this dissertation began to form. In his 1949 article for Cyril Connelly and Stephen Spender's *Horizon*, "Studies in Genius: Henry Miller," Durrell draws out the notion of the 'unknown' as Miller described it in his June 19, 1936 letter to Michael Fraenkel, which was later published as a part of their *Hamlet* correspondence (346-364). As the 'unknown' takes shape, Durrell places an increasing emphasis on the reader and the gaps, absences, or ambiguities in a text. What I take up as their shared notion of the 'unknown' relates to the textual gaps and ambiguities that prompt the reader to add to the text, to develop it further than it actually goes. But, as prominent gaps, these same missing materials return attention to themselves and thereby to the reader's reading process. The reader is made to attend to his or her own oversights or additions to the text.

A modest concept, perhaps more akin to the false leads of a mystery novel, this 'unknown' prompts a significant revaluation of Durrell's and Miller's works. Such revaluations range widely, covering the problems in geography that return the reader to his or her own neo-colonial imposition of exoticism and stereotypes on foreign locales. The pressing absences and unresolvable ambiguities that surround character descriptions also attract attention through their kinship with the notion of the 'unknown,' such that missing adjectives or names, and even constantly changing adjectives, deny the stability of the ego. The prominent sexual ambiguity both authors express yet are rarely afforded in criticism then follows as a natural development of this instability of identity.

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[11] This was published as *The Best of Henry Miller* in the British edition of the same year.

This simple technique of creating gaps relates to the vision both Durrell and Miller had for the reader's engagements with their works, and it therefore suggests a richness of associations and influences. Reading through the published works to the archives of their manuscripts and correspondences, I therefore use their 'unknown' as a way to survey the commonalities and conflicts between their *oeuvres* following the most prominent critical approaches Durrell and Miller's have received: their ties to specific geographies, the nature and role of identity in their works, and their depictions of sexualities.

In the following chapters, I discuss each of these topics in turn. I begin with one of the most prominent examples of their 'unknown,' (1) Miller's visit to Mycenae in *The Colossus of Maroussi*. This establishes a context for defining their notion of the unknown and its relationship to gaps and indeterminacies. I contrast this to other critical paradigms in which the unknown plays a significant role, mainly the postcolonial and psychoanalytic, and I then elaborate *this* unknown through their contemporary, William Empson. To round out this overview of the issue, I turn again to their depictions of Greek landscapes through Durrell's Greek writings, "Oil for the Saint" and *Prospero's Cell*. With their notion of the 'unknown' in place and anchored in textual elements of their works, I am then able to explore its implications (2)—I focus on how this 'unknown' prompts a revision of their place in discussions of Modernism, and especially the lineage of their ideas growing from their Parisian and in particular their Greek associates. The landscapes that exemplify their 'unknown' and the intellectual milieu in which it was nurtured match each other. Both are Greek, and this directs attention to the Greek and Philhellenic elements of their works, as well as their intellectual friendships with Greek Modernists. After relocating Durrell and Miller in their milieu, I trace further implications for the predominant approaches to their works: Selfhood and Sexuality. I argue that the same gaps and ambiguities to which their Greek materials point also appear in the instability of their characters' identities and in the sexually charged contents for which Durrell and Miller were both made famous and banned. I then conclude (3) that the 'unknown' Durrell highlights in Miller's works is a demonstrably useful concept for tracing the relationship between their writings. Furthermore, it prompts an important reconsideration of the trends in scholarly approaches to both of them.

This notion of the unknown not only suggests alternatives or revisions to some extant criticism, but more importantly it augments the available scholarly materials by returning attention to informative fragments that have otherwise been overlooked: Durrell's irony, Miller's distinctness from his narrators, the politics of their travel literature, their resistance to illustrious contemporaries, the anti-heteronormative nature of their eroticism, and the care they took not only in crafting words but also in removing them. The 'unknown' becomes a double cynosure—it attracts attention to itself by becoming increasingly prominent, mainly by returning to textual gaps and moment of ambiguity, which prompts the reader to reconsider the decisions he or she made and the process by which he or she made them. However, the 'unknown' also takes on the double meaning of a cynosure, being both something that focuses attention and also a guiding star. It is the tail of Anubis that guides the reader through the text in an arranged path. I, therefore, ask my readers to tolerate a tour of several landscapes in my opening section in order to develop a broad enough map on which to begin tracing the implications of the missing pieces.

TEXTUAL UNKNOWNS, AMBIGUITY, GAPS, AND LOCALE

> Tomorrow I should see for myself whether the old Greek ambience had survived the war, whether it was still a reality based in the landscape and the people—or whether we had simply invented it for ourselves in the old days, living comfortably on foreign exchange, patronising reality with our fancies and making bad literature from them. (Durrell, *Reflections* 17)

> Mycenae is closed in, huddled up, writhing with muscular contortions like a wrestler. Even the light, which falls on it with merciliess clarity, gets sucked in, shunted off, grayed, beribboned. There were never two worlds so closely juxtaposed and yet so antagonistic.... Move a hair's breadth either way and you are in a totally different world. (Miller, *Collosus* 88)

i. Miller's Case of the Cavernous...

This section begins with a lacuna in Miller's travel narrative, *The Colossus of Maroussi*, and uses it to develop a notion of the 'unknown,' as well as its function in the text. At the heart of this dissertation is Miller's seminal statement, endorsed (though revised) by Durrell, that "The unknown is constant and the advances we make into it are illusory. I love the unknown precisely because it is a 'beyond,' because it *is* impenetrable" (Durrell, "Studies" 48; quoting Miller, *Hamlet* 356; emphasis original). Notably, this quotation by Durrell revises Miller's original statement: "the unknown is *a* constant" (Miller, *Hamlet* 356; emphasis mine).

Durrell removes the indefinite article, which makes the unknown the focus of the statement with constancy as its trait, rather than leaving the unknown as a type of constant. This greater emphasis where 'unknown' requires an article but 'constant' no longer does demonstrates Durrell's interest. As Durrell notes, citing but reframing Miller, "The exploration of the unknown yields only the known. We discover only what we set out to find" ("Studies" 47), and this situation suggests projection. This language is telling. The "impenetrable" unknown returns attention to only that which is already somehow familiar, and the only contents that are found in the unknown are those that were already anticipated or even brought to it in some sense: the reader's projections onto the text, which fill a gap.

However, the unknown is juxtaposed with another term. The unknown that is characterized by impenetrability and reflection stands in contrast to "*the truth*" (Durrell, "Studies" 47; emphasis original). As Miller argues,

> Truth is not arrived at that way. The exploration of the unknown yields only the known. We discover only what we set out to find, nothing more. Truth on the other hand comes instantaneously, without search. *Truth is*, as Krishnamurti says. You don't win it. It comes to you as a gift, and to receive it you must be in the proper state. All this is nonsense to you, I know… It's just a piece of mysticism, if you like, which keeps me gay and fit. The unknown is constant and the advances we make into it are illusory. I love the unknown precisely because it is a "beyond", because it *is* impenetrable. (Durrell, "Studies" 47-48; emphasis original)

Miller is emphatic that this truth "is not arrived at" through "science, metaphysics, religion…. [Instead,] Truth… comes instantaneously, without search…. It comes to you as a gift, and to receive it you must be in the proper state" (Durrell, "Studies" 47; emphasis original). He is also quick to give Fraenkel an excuse for this contrast between "truth" and "the unknown," saying "It's just a piece of mysticism" (47-48), but this dismissal points to what Durrell identifies as some of Miller's most intriguing innovations, such as his replacement of form with flux (49). Durrell's and Miller's unknown points to process and not form,[12] and my examination of encounters with the unknown in their works turns to process, such as that involved in reading. My concern is not with the Truth Miller points to but with how he locates the unknown in relation to it.

Miller hopes the unknown will engender a state in the reader where Truth will be intuited, received as a gift. It is through struggling with the unknown and eventually giving up the irritable reading after fact or reason as in Keats' Negative Capability, that the reader is brought to a state where the Truth might be given. The passive voice is also important since the giver of Truth remains absent. This moment is mystical and cannot be written, but writing can bring us to a state where we can accept the gift. Moreover, when Miller comments on Truth juxtaposed to the unknown, his reference is very likely to Krishnamurti's comments from his 3 August 1929 speech in Ommen, Holland:

> 'Truth is a pathless land'. Man cannot come to it through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, not through any philosophic knowledge or psychological technique. He has to find it through

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[12] Form becomes a point of contention between Durrell and Miller. I have already pointed to their disagreement over *Sexus*, which is largely based on issues of form. As Levitt points out, Miller's "response to the complete *Quartet* illustrates the extent of his enthusiasm, the limits of his critical perception and, at the same time, the vast distance which Durrell had travelled away from him…. [Durrell] worshipped a different god; he had come, like Darley, to be interested in 'literature'" (Levitt 318). Durrell continued to leave his works incomplete, and in this way his continued development in form remains akin in purpose to Miller's formlessness, but the literary styles grew further apart.

> the mirror of relationship, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection.... His perception of life is shaped by the concepts already established in his mind. (45-45, 57-58)

Truth may be a place, but the aporia is an impass insofar as is is 'pathless,' in Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida's use of the term. Yet, Durrell's and Miller's aporias are not places of rest or cessation—they take on the second meaning of an aporia: a puzzle.[13] One aporia ends examination and another allows continuation but without solution. Moreover, it is not through solving the puzzle (ie: filling the gap of the uknown) that Truth is received. Instead, it the state induced by the examination that prompts the readiness for the Truth.

This aporetic state, in Miller's formulation, is one of openness to what he has conceived of as the Truth, and this juxtaposition against the Truth, in Miller's mysticism, characterizes the unknown with which this dissertation is concerned. Hence the potential for solipsistic or indeterminate outcomes is beside the point. The unknown does not lead us to a truth or conclusion through "intellectual analysis or introspective dissection" but only to what Miller has envisioned as a *readiness* for the Truth, should it be offered. This still may be "just a piece of mysticism," but the notion of the unknown produced by this mysticism, as well as its turn away from *pursuing* truth, underlies the continuity of the critical concepts that characterize both Durrell's and Miller's oeuvres.

A particularly striking example of such an unknown, one that is pregnant with projection and tied to a specific locale, is in Miller's semi-autobiographical *The Colossus of*

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[13] This distinction is based on the early uses of aporia, where distinct meanings emerge. Derrida and de Man use aporia in the sense of an impasse (απορος), while Durrell and Miller are more in line with the use seen in Plato's *Euthyphro* where it means a puzzle (απορία), though the meanings obviously have the potential to overlap. For Classical examples, difficulty in passing relates to Xenephon while perplexity relates to Plato.

Maroussi. Miller's writings on Greece play out similar patterns to Durrell's, though obviously through a less intricate familiarity with the nuances of individual sites than Durrell had through his long residences and fluent Greek[14]. Nevertheless, in *The Colossus of Maroussi*, Miller creates an awkward moment for his reader where the Philhellenic image of crumbling splendours of a past civilization is displaced, and this begins the series of difficulties in the text that lead to what is perhaps Miller's most salient instance of the 'unknown.' As Miller relates, "I am standing now at Mycenae, trying to understand what happened over a period of centuries" (*Colussus* 89); however, rather than finding an image of imagined Hellenism or Philhellenism, Miller quite explicitly reconstitutes the scene in terms of the familiar (from his cultural place of reference):

> Below, from the great Argive plain the mist is rising. It might be Pueblo, Colorado, so dislocated is it from time and boundary. Down there, in that steaming plain where the automotrice crawls like a caterpillar, is it not possible there once stood wigwams? Can I be sure that there never were any Indians here? Everything connected with Argos, shimmering now in the distance as in the romantic illustrations for text-books, smacks of the American Indian. (*Colossus* 89-90)

The mist that blocks accurate perception of the thing-in-itself is akin to Durrell's scene on the Acropolis in *Tunc* where "One could see nothing very clearly" (80). The oddity for Miller is the transforming discomfort that "discover[ing] only what [one] set out to find" entails.

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[14] It is also significant to note that in the seminal article for this dissertation, Durrell's "Studies in Genius: Henry Miller," an elision is distinctly made between Durrell's approach to Greece and his interpretation of the role of the unknown in Miller's works.

Rather than an unfamiliar ancient Greek landscape, Miller can only find something he already knows and with which he is familiar: Pueblo and American Indians.

As *The Colossus of Maroussi* progresses, the process in which this discovery occurs becomes the focus. In this first instance, the landscape becomes fully recognizable to Miller as an American, but by being aware of this element of projection in his perception (Greece understood in terms of American Indians and Italian words for machinery), Miller defamiliarizes it for the reader, whose expectations are not met. This exploration of the unknown very literally yields only the known. In the same way, the language challenges the reader. For instance, Miller describes the "automotrice" (89), which is most likely a reference to the train from Athens to Argos; Miller chooses to use the Italian term for 'train' rather than the Greek. While it is likely not Miller's intent, this provides a very quick trinity of national blurrings, such that Italian words are juxtaposed again Native American "wigwams" and "Indians" (89) all in a particularly Greek locale.

More specifically, apart from these blurrings of national distinctions and any realistic representation of what are purported to be 'real' sites, Miller makes a point of revisiting one site in two dramatic scenes that paradigmatically point to how the unknown functions in his and Durrell's works. While in Argos, first with Katsimbalis and later with Durrell and Durrell's first wife Nancy, Miller describes his encounter with a staircase leading to a well somewhere inside the walls of Mycenae, past the Lion's Gate (the oldest monumental sculpture in Europe, a gate that acts as a passage to the ancient). This scene is singular in the novel. It stands out as a unique encounter with an un-named horror and revulsion that are not elaborated or described in any direct manner and that does not recur at any other locale. Given the nature of the text's idealization of all elements of Miller's experiences in Greece, this sudden contrast is quite striking to the reader. It is not even introduced in its first appearance in the novel (91) but begins 'mid-scene' after a break, a gap in the text that is not filled through narrative. Its repetition at both the opening and closing portions of the book also emphasizes its role as a frame for the otherwise paradise-like imagery.

After a break of several lines, and after having crossed through the Lion's Gate, Miller writes:

> We have just come up from the slippery staircase, Katsimbalis and I. We have not descended it, only peered down with lighted matches. The heavy roof is buckling with the weight of time. To breathe too heavily is enough to pull the world down over our ears. (*Colossus* 91)

The reader's attention is first drawn to the verb tense, such that we are brought into the imagined present tense of the narrative voice. More specifically, we are attracted to the direct contradiction between the two perfect past tense statements that point to the continuation in the present: "We have just come up" and "We have not descended" (91). The "from" may qualify this, yet the chiasmus stands. This sets up a generalized sense of fear on Miller's part where the contents of the well and staircase remain a complete unknown to the reader. It is this element of the scene that is important to the thematic trend of uncertainty and ambiguity. While there are ambiguous elements in Miller's cross-national descriptions of Argos, such as where he elides it with North America, this scene with the mysterious well is neither ambiguous nor indeterminate; it is entirely undescribed.

Adjectives, titles, nouns, and any textual sense of the events between the contradictions are absent. *This* is the primary instance of the 'unknown' this dissertation discusses. While Miller and Katsimbalis descend the "slippery staircase" to "peer... down with lighted matches" (*Colossus* 91), just what they see while peering is never mentioned and the contents of this abyss remain a foreboding unknown. Moreover, contradictory statements play a role here, with Miller coming up a staircase that he explicitly states he had not "descended" (*Colossus* 91)—"from" may appear to qualify his descent, but it is dismissed by his refusal "to go *back* down into that slimy well of horrors" (91; emphasis mine). The 'unknown' is further characterized by the ambiguity described above. All this places the reader in the awkward position of creating meaning from an either/or ambiguity that cannot be resolved, and hence, any resolution made by the reader is again a reflection of "what [he or she] set out to find" (Durrell, "Studies" 47). Furthermore, and more importantly, this ambiguity surrounds an aporia that invites the reader's contribution. It is an unknown not made of the ineffable or transcendent but of the absent, the ambiguous, or the contradictory. Yet, it is a cynosure—it attracts attention and guides.

Wolfgang Iser has described this "blank" as akin to ambiguity, both of which are contained in the notion of the unknown put forward by Durrell and Miller.[15] Focusing more on the reader's concretization of the text, which may be best characterized as the reader's resolution of a given indeterminacy in his or her reading, Iser contends:

> What we have called the blank arises out of the indeterminacy of the text, and although it appears to be akin to Ingarden's "place of indeterminacy," it is different in kind and function. The latter term is used to designate a gap in the determinacy of the intentional object [the referred to 'thing' in the 'real' world] or in the sequence of the "schematic aspects.' (183)

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[15] Stephen Kellman has also pointed to the similarities between Durrell and Iser in their descriptions of the reading experience (Kellman 81).

This is to say that, for Iser, Miller's well would come from the indeterminate in general, whether formed by absence or another complexity. It is distinct from a missing detail that troubles the intentional object or somehow ties it to the phenomenological problem of unreal intentional objects (when the subject's object does not really exist).

Such problems with reality are obviously problematic in fiction, which does not have the presumed restriction of referring to an intentional object, even if in this case Miller may be doing so. Regardless of the reality of the well, we still have the aporia, and here Iser argues

> *the blank, however, designates a vacancy in the overall system of the text, the filling of which brings about an interaction of textual patterns*. In other words, the need for completion is replaced here by the need for combination. It is only when the schemata of the text are related to one another that the imaginary object [the one created in the reader's mind] can begin to be formed, and it is the blanks that get this connecting operation under way. (Iser 183; emphasis mine)

In this instance, Miller and Durrell's unknown is more practical. Rather than leading us back to the problem of intentional objects that may not be real but derive from the reader's creation of an image of them, Durrell and Miller focus on the blank itself. We are then able to keep track of "the filling… [of] a vacancy in the overall system of the text" (Iser 183), emotionally filling Miller's well with contents, descriptions, and qualities that are absent from the text. This is an act of projection onto the text akin to the psychoanalytic notion of projection, as I will discuss in more detail shortly.

All of this, in turn, relates to the process of reading the text and practicing 'gap-filling' through projection. Again turning to Iser,

> [these blanks] indicate that the different segments of the text *are* to be connected, even though the text itself does not say so. They are the unseen joints of the text, and as they mark off schemata and textual perspectives from one another, they simultaneously trigger acts of ideation on the reader's part. Consequently, when the schemata and perspectives have been linked together, the blanks 'disappear.' (183; italics original)

When the reader's schema draws on the available textual materials, the aporias in the text tend to be seamlessly stitched over. Iser is, admittedly, focused on a schematic approach to reading, and while his notion of concretization has been supported by reader response work, it is not the focus here. Instead, it is the resolution of indeterminacies through either "completion" or "combination" that I wish to draw out for Durrell and Miller's blanks and gaps, or more precisely, their encouragement for the reader to *not* resolve indeterminacies nor fill gaps. The two particularly attract my attention when they direct the reader back to these "blanks" (in Iser's terminology) and thereby prompt the reader to consider the process by which blanks are filled or linked. Miller and Durrell both aggravate this tension as well by generally drawing attention back to these gaps and how this resolution occurs, hence making the blanks 'reappear,' palpably asserting their presence (a presence of absence). It is not that the blank is then conceptualized or given traits; instead, the absence turns the reader's attention to his or her own additions and to recognize that the added material is extratextual.

Nonetheless, in the absence of direct descriptions of the well in Mycenae, Miller does provide a context through juxtapositions. The generalized descriptions of Mycenae create verbal links to this unknown, underground site that give it a context if not a definite character, image, or trait. For instance, before crossing through the Lion's Gate, Miller notes:

> Mycenae is closed in, huddled up, writhing with muscular contortions like a wrestler. Even the light, which falls on it with merciless clarity, gets *sucked in*, shunted off, grayed, beribboned. There were never two worlds so closely juxtaposed and yet so antagonistic. It is Greenwich here with respect to everything that concerns the soul of man. Move a hair's breadth either way and you are in a totally different world[16]. This is the great shining bulge of *horror*, the *slope* whence man, having attained his zenith, *slipped* back and fell into the *bottomless pit*. (*Colossus* 88; emphases mine)

What catches my attention (but only in retrospect, not in an initial reading) is that before the scene in the subterranean "*slippery* staircase" (91; emphasis mine) that Miller climbs up without having descended, the reader is given this provocative image of a "bottomless pit" that man "*slipped*" into as a way of understanding Mycenae (88; emphasis mine). As a "horror," it recalls the unnamed horror of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, yet it is also ancient as well as modern. While neither the "slope" of Mycenae's descent nor Katsimbalis and Miller's staircase are directly described, the first bottomless pit is associated with "the great shining bulge of horror" (88), which adequately describes Miller's sensations when encountering the second literal descent (which the text asserts he never makes, even though he ascends and refuses to go back down). The horror, the horror is both the modern in

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[16] It is a departure, but this phrase has an affinity to Balthazar's comment in *Balthazar* that "Two paces east or west and the whole picture is changed" (14), which is important enough to Durrell's conceptual intentions in the novel for him to repeat the same notions mid-way through the same book (140).

Katsimablis' war experiences and the ancient in Mycenae's destruction after the ruin of Troy, and the distinction between the two is blurred.

Moreover, Miller contrasts his earlier descriptions of Greece when he writes "Even the light... *falls* on [Mycenae] with merciless clarity" (*Colossus* 88; emphasis mine), which differs significantly from his previous contention that Greece is a place where "the light was intense" (*Colossus* 3). In his first notebook on Greece, he even goes so far as to claim "the islands *float* on bands of light" ("First Impressions" 59; emphasis mine), which leaves the broad reader reconciling another implicit inconsistency. Furthermore, these shifts on light are significant since light is a recurring trope in Philhellenic discourse and especially in Durrell's and Miller's Greek works. Durrell even notes this aspect of Miller's book just after its publication and his receipt of it in Athens in 1941: "And as for the true pristine brightness . In order to deal with Greek landscape one must simply put it on with the palette knife , and this is what you have done . 'The Colossus of Maroussi ' is full of the brightest sunlight and alive at all points" ("/a letter" 1). Even with such a prominent trope, we do not need to require consistency from fiction; however, the presence of such incommensurable language and its general resolution in the reader's work of reading emphasize how these kinds of contradictions and aporias reflect what Durrell and Miller term the 'unknown.' The prominent nature of this instance with descriptions of light thereby takes on significance.

Projecting further impressions onto the blank screen of this subterranean space, Miller describes Katsimbalis in terms that reinforce those used for the descent of Mycenae and Agamemmnon's war. While they are ascending this odd staircase,

> Katsimbalis was for crawling down on all fours, on his belly if needs be. He has been in many a tight spot before; he has played the mole on the Balkan

> front, has wormed his way through mud and blood, has danced like a madman from fear and frenzy, killed all in sight including his own men, has been blown skyward clinging to a tree, has had his brain concussed, his rear blunderbussed, his arms hanging in shreds, his face blackened with powder, his bones and sinews wrenched and unsocketed. He is telling me it all over again as we stand midway to earth and sky, the lintel sagging more and more, the matches giving out. "We don't want to miss this," he pleads. But I refuse to go *back down into* that slimy well of horrors. (Miller, *Colossus* 91; emphasis mine)

While Katsimbalis' experiences are not directly equated with the descending staircase (or is it a well?), they do provide a tone for its impression on the reader. Like the war trenches, this is a space of destruction and horror that threatens to leave one's "arms hanging in shreds... [and] bones and sinews wrenched and unsocketed" (*Colossus* 91). Moreover, this reminds the reader of Ancient Mycenae, which in legend declined after the Trojan war. Miller's blank well might even be an allusion to the shaft graves associated with Mycenae, making Katsimbalis' war-time trenches more pregnant with meaning. This would also grant a higher degree of concern for World War II than critics tend to note in the text. Nonetheless, despite this juxtaposition, no such descriptions are ever granted to the unexplored well itself and it remains a blank with allusions imposed only by the reader.

Also, while the site itself is undescribed, Miller does venture far enough to apply an indeterminate host of "horrors" to it (91). Notably, while this scene is entirely absent from "First Impressions of Greece," Miller's notebook about his trip, which he left with George

Seferis,[17] he does repeat the Italian reference to the "automotrice" ("First Impressions" 66). He likewise repeats the word 'horrors': "Now I catch sight of Mycenae, the ruins, the place of *horrors*" ("First Impressions" 66; emphasis mine). Furthermore, Miller's biographical and fictional journey to Greece is curtailed by the approach of World War II and the invasion of the Germans, which is gestured to in the language he associates with Katsimbalis while in this staircase: "mud and blood,... danced like a madman from fear and frenzy, killed all in sight..., has been blown skyward... his face blackened with powder" (*Colossus* 91). This language calls the ravages of war directly to the reader's mind, especially through the direct reminder that Katsimbalis "has played the mole on the Balkan front" (*Colossus* 91), and in 1941 when the novel was published, this kind of reminder of war would have been very salient to an American and European readership.

While the staircase, which is so under-described that it could also be a well, is left as an unknown, these insinuations (through juxtaposition) project themselves into this blank space, giving this unknown a 'feeling' for the reader that carries a weight more pronounced than an absence ought to have. More importantly, this functions primarily through projection by the reader rather than by any form of textual description. This is the manner in which both Durrell and Miller render the unknown 'known.' They use pre-existing notions that are available to the reader (such as the stock "horrors" of war in this case) to discuss the indeterminate (a completely undescribed subterranean space), such that the reader finds in the unknown something that is oddly familiar. Nonetheless, this disturbs the same stereotypes and familiarities that typically constitute this act of 'knowing.' Hence, the reader is able to recognize that the exploration of the unknown yields only the known. In finding *only* what we expect, we lose the sense of exploration. By giving the reader what she or he "set out to find"—in other words the familiar, albeit in an unfamiliar way—Miller potentially exposes the contrivance, and hence the contrivances that mask the totally unknown: an actual absence.

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[17] Also notable is that this text was not published until 1973, thirty-two years after the publication of *The Colossus of Maroussi* in 1941.

This scene also repeats near the end of the novel as Miller returns to Mycenae with Durrell and Durrell's then-wife Nancy. In this repetition of his experiences with Katsimbalis, Miller writes: "This time, being equipped with a flashlight, we decided to descend the slippery staircase to the well. Durrell went first, Nancy next, and I followed gingerly behind. About half-way down we halted *instinctively* and debated whether to go any farther" (*Colossus* 214; emphasis mine). While the undescribed staircase is now given the characteristic of leading to a well, and while it also implies that they have not even actually reached the well that cannot be descended, I should trouble this by pointing out that a well is an absence of earth. Miller uses a gap in the earth in order to gesture to a gap in his text. Moreover, even though they are equipped with a flashlight that seems to light their descent, this site remains unilluminated by direct description. As Miller himself suggests, much of what eventually makes them halt is "instinctiv[e]" (*Colossus* 214), as is the unease this scene arouses in his reader. This is to say, the reader is never given a direct statement that clarifies the nature of the well, nor is it even afforded an ambiguous description.

This call for 'instinct' recalls the descriptions given of Katsimbalis' war-time horrors, horrors previously juxtaposed with this site in Mycenae during Miller's first described visit in the book. For the associated terrors that are never actually tied to the site, Miller tells his reader:

> I experienced the same feeling of terror as I had the first time with Katsimbalis, more, if anything, since we had descended deeper into the bowels of the earth. I had two distinct fears—one, that the slender buttress at the head of the stairs would give way and leave us to smother to death in utter darkness, and two, that a mis-step would send me slithering down into the pit amidst a spawn of snakes, lizards, and bats. I was tremendously relieved when Durrell, after much persuasion, consented to abandon the descent. I was thankful that I was now first instead of last. (*Colossus* 214)

While Miller now explains that he "experienced the same feeling of terror" (*Colossus* 214), this is actually remarkably unproductive for the inquisitive reader since he never actually described his terror in the first incident. Initially, the reader is only told that there are "horrors" *in* the well, but not that Miller's narrator is experiencing them. Like Conrad's horror, this is open, and is like Poe's narrator in "The Pit and the Pendulum" who "averted [his] eyes" and cannot tell what is in the pit other than something worse than all the other torture chamber terrors, the horror remains inarticulate and is a gap for the reader (Poe 171-172). Moreover, while "horrors" is often repeated (Miller, *Colossus* 88, 91, and 214; Miller, "First Impressions" 66), exactly what is horrific about the underground chamber is left to the reader's interpretive activity in all instances, since only those things that become associated with the chamber are horrific, and the site itself is devoid of explicit traits.

Moreover, the imaginative element of the creation of this well goes beyond "a spawn of snakes, lizards, and bats" (*Colossus* 214) with which Miller fills it; the fluid filling the well stems from Miller's brain in the form of a projection. This revision of the first hint at contents (or a specific content for the scene) is stated more overtly when Miller notes:

> When we reached the surface I was in a cold sweat and mentally still going through the motion of kicking off the demons who were trying to drag me back into the horror-laden mire. Thinking back on it now, after a lapse of months, I honestly believe that I would rather be shot than forced to descend that staircase alone. In fact, I think I would die of heart failure before ever reaching the bottom. (*Colossus* 214)

In this expanded scenario immediately after the first generalized contents of the well are given, the "spawn of snakes, lizards, and bats" is transformed into "the *demons* who were trying to drag [Miller] back into the *horror*-laden mire" (*Colossus* 214; emphasis mine). First, the "snakes, lizards, and bats" become figurative "demons," revealing that their presence is not literal, but rather figurative and indicates the narrator's personal demons, which have contents only through the reader's act of interpretation or projection. Moreover, these demons, symbolic creatures that demons tend to be, constitute the very fluid and opaque contents of the well, which is now a "horror-laden mire" (214).

In this manner, what has previously been indeterminate but associated by juxtaposition with a host of worldly horrors like Katsimbalis' war experiences, is now decisively linked with the fearful nature of this cavern. The well is only filled figuratively, but its indeterminate contents are concretely linked to the multiply repeated "horrors" (Miller, *Colossus* 88, 91, 214; Miller, "First Impressions" 66). This word appears as the sole adjective applied to the well, or rather, to the well's contents, rather than to the well itself. In this way, the well becomes a textual moment that is particularly rich for the reader's interpretive agency. The text itself cannot be relied on for descriptions, contents, or even adjectives; yet, the reader's emotional engagement with this moment is likely to be high and imaginative. In fact, this is precisely the response I have had using the text in the classroom. Before I began lecturing or guiding discussion, my independent-minded students in the Edmonton Lifelong Learners Association (for senior citizens) immediately took up this scene as the most striking and perturbing in the novel, initiating discussion of it. Without the reader's imaginative independence, a reader who is given complex interpretive tasks, the scene is largely without content with regard to the locale around which everything spirals. Katsimabilis' war experiences, Miller's demons, Mycenae's horrors, and the horrific mire all centre on a site that is absent in the actual descriptive language of the text. Therefore, in order to engage with these elements, the creation of the site is dependent on the reader who fills the 'unknown' of this "pit" with his or her own anticipated contents (Miller, *Colossus* 214).

This site quite fittingly exemplifies the function of the unknown in Durrell's and Miller's texts, returning attention to the brief comment by Miller (quoted by Durrell) that opens this dissertation: "The unknown is constant and the advances we make into it are illusory" (Durrell, "Studies" 48). This implies something akin to what might be called the ambiguity of absence (missing but necessary descriptions that leave a number of possibilities uncollapsed). This is, more accurately, the function of the well. However, there is a distinction between the ambiguous and the unknown. Both not only allow for but force complex interpretive agency on the reader. While the unknown can have associative contents and may reflect preconceived stereotypes or anticipations, the ambiguous is less amenable to readerly control. I would compare this to the notion of erasure, such that the "ambiguous" is akin to the signifier operating *sous rature*. It is contextually clear that ~~ambiguity~~ operates within an established range of meanings, but with a definite gesture to those Derridean traces that are absent in the incompleteness or defective nature of the word. In contrast, Durrell's and Miller's sense of the "unknown" is more akin to that which is itself absent. The unknown is that which is gestured to in the erasure, and hence it is most marked in their texts when absence becomes palpable and the reader's projection of an ostensibly complete meaning is mirrored back. This process is so emphatic that the gap then becomes a cynosure.

When Miller refers to the "slimy well of horrors" (*Colossus* 91) the reader has to make interpretive decisions over "slimy" being a tactile or ethical description just as "horrors" can contain a host of properties or specific representations, but the absence of any description of that on which a scene pivots allows for greater complexity and projection by the reader. Beyond associations based on juxtaposition, any suggestive content (as ambiguous as such content may be) is unavailable to the reader unless he or she adds materials during the interpretive process, much like Hemingway's 'iceberg' theory of writing by excision, his "new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood" (*Moveable* 75). For Durrell and Miller, the omission is the absent 'unknown,' although it is affiliated with ambiguity.

In his comments quoted by Durrell, Miller discusses the "unknown," not the ambiguous or the uncertain, and this unknown is like his undescribed pit insofar as the advances he makes into it are illusory. These advances do nothing to illuminate the unknown itself. Moreover, the light cast by his inquiry (as with the reader's inquiry) does not illuminate this gap—instead, he finds only the silhouettes of his own "demons" rather than the shadows of any Platonic absolutes (Miller, *Colossus* 214). He is frightened of his own shadow, not that of some beast behind him, though the silhouette is the same. In this same way, the traces of deferred meanings that constitute the unknown show only reflections of the reader's own materials.

The unknown illustrated by the well remains continually evasive, and Miller's slipperiness in his descriptions reflects this evasiveness, with the ever-slippery unknown traits of the well continually being replaced by what we set out to find. This is to say, and as Miller has already said, the exploration of the unknown yields only the known, just as the exploration of the well yields no knowledge of *its* unknown contents but instead only reflects the reader's expectations. The only exposed contents are the conditions that Miller brought to the well and his projected anticipations of what such a site could contain or what it reflects of his unvoiced fears. The only thing *discovered* is the fact of the absence, and in the archaic sense of discovery implying a revelation or exposure, Miller and his reader only find what they mask the gap with. He finds the personal demons he carries there, the horrors with which he is already acutely familiar, and he specifically reminds the reader of these features of this unknown. There is no extensive uncertainty or ambiguous language applied to the well itself, which remains by and large without imagery or direct description—there is, instead, the ever-shifting features of the reader's reflected expectations. As with my senior citizen students who focused on Miller's pit of terrors, that which was left without description became the cynosure, drawing attention and giving us a way to read the text. Just like Poe's or Conrad's horror, the empty blank in the text is the least described but has the most power to provoke and guide—the horror comes from within, and in recognizing this projection, the reader is given a guide to engaging with the text.

ii. Theorizing the Unknown

> Meanwhile, of course, poetry is there in the shadows, secure from our definitions and explanations, in appearance an almost autonomous faculty, in operation posing as communication. To those who practice her she appears ennobling and exasperating; to those who read her a mad nymph locked in a prism; to those who preach about her (too often alas) a butterfly pinned to a cork slab and classified. As for the poet, he is a child of nature and would agree with Bacon that 'nature to be commanded must be obeyed;' and 'that which in contemplation is as the cause, is in operation as the rule.' (Durrell, *Key* xii)

Durrell and Miller's particular notion of the "unknown" is, at this point, best defined by noting the other unknowns from which theirs differs. It is not an adjective to another concept, such as the unknown event or the Unknown Soldier. It is a noun unto itself, and this is a starting point. At its simplest, the unknown we encounter is Durrell's re-articulation of Miller's impenetrable *absence*. Like Miller's cave in Mycenae, it is not something hidden or repressed, but instead it is an actual absence, a gap. This gap may become a receptacle for a reader's projection of repressed materials, and the reader may find something otherwise hidden when exploring this absence, for their unknown is the absence itself, not what is added to it. In his comments on Miller, Durrell turns the reader's attention to the gaps themselves and the reader's reply to the gaps. This is the area where the most distinctive differences emerge.

The first unknown that relates to Durrell and Miller's, yet is not quite overlapping in meaning, is the postcolonial. As Said outlines, knowledge relates to power, both justifying the exercise of power and generating power itself. Knowing the unknown is then an exercise of power through this ability to name, limit, and understand—the dominated object of colonial discourse embodies the postcolonial unknown. In his first emphasis on this point in *Orientalism*, Said outlines this process:

> England knows Egypt; Egypt is what England knows; England knows that Egypt cannot have self-government; England confirms that by occupying Egypt; for the Egyptians, Egypt is what England has occupied and now governs; foreign occupation therefore becomes "the very basis" of contemporary Egyptian civilization; Egypt requires, indeed insists upon, British occupation. (34)

This is not complete though. The process of knowing becomes governing and having power over something else, but it carries two further key traits: (1), "to know and study the Orient[is] an idea that would both fill the mind and satisfy one's great, previously conceived expectations" (65). To fulfill this, "what the Orientalist does is to *confirm* the Orient in his reader's eyes; he neither tries nor wants to unsettle already firm convictions" (65), so this becomes a process of assuaging preconceived expectations, or enforcing what have become projections onto the Orient.

In this way, Said's sense of the unknown of the Other relates to Orientalism having "less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world" (*Orientalism* 12). It is a construct used to gain knowledge, and thereby power, over the Orient, since "to have... knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it" (32). In this context, Occidental knowledge of the Orient *becomes* the Orient, and moreover, knowledge in general acts as a *creation* of meaning and a way to dominate the unknown based on the biases already in place before the relative perceptions occur. As with Nietzsche's cause-creating drive, it is a fear-driven projection. As Said points out, this knowledge is better "grasped as a set of constraints upon and limitation of thought than... a positive doctrine" (*Orientalism* 32). It is decidedly divorced from a transcendent Truth despite resting on the epistemological foundation of truth-claims.

Gayatri Spivak elaborates this further through the ethical problem of communication between the Orient and the Occident, between the Same and Other, or in her most famous discussion of the issue, the question of can the subaltern speak. Insofar as speaking involves the dialogic interaction and mutual investment in understanding, coming to know the unknown Other involves setting aside, to some degree, the power dynamic Said outlines in his sense of knowing. In order for dialogue to occur, one party cannot speak for the other, and this is the problem she outlines with representation (Spivak, "Can" 275). Speaking, for Spivak, is "a transaction between the speaker and the listener" (Landry and MacLean "Subaltern Talk" *The Spivak Reader* 275), and hence her subaltern cannot speak (Spivak, "Can" 308). The Same's knowing of the Other prevents the communicative process, which does fall in line with Durrell and Miller's "constant" unknown, the advances into which are "illusory" because "it *is* impenetrable" (Durrell, "Studies" 48; emphasis original).

This impenetrability, however, distinguishes the unknown from Spivak's project since it is the ethical refusal to cast the Other as unknowable that she sets as her task (whether knowledge can be had or not). Spivak invokes similar language, describing her notion of the native informant: "he (and occasionally she) *is* a blank, though generative of a text of cultural identity that only the West (or a Western-model discipline) could inscribe" (Spivak, *Critique* 6). This is the stereotypical projection of the repressed contents of the Same in order to construct the Other, which is the problem addressed by both Spivak and Said. Moreover, the *process* where the Same projects contents over the Other or speaks on behalf of the Other is akin. Nevertheless, the nature of what is "unknown" again introduces the difference. Durrell and Miller's unknown does not speak because it is a gap. It does not exist, unlike Spivak's subaltern or Said's Orient. Spivak's "blank" is figurative, and the ethics of speaking are caught up in denying this absence when it appears in colonial discourse—Durrell's and Miller's blank is literal.

This, however, points to a closer notion of the unknown from psychoanalysis. The language of projection, censorship, and knowing equating with power is similar. Moreover, both Spivak and Said mark this through reference to Freud and Lacan, as does most postcolonial theory. Homi Bhabha articulates this in language that expressly leads to psychoanalysis, noting "The discourse of the 'social' then finds its means of representation in a kind of *unconsciousness* that obscures the immediacy of meaning, darkens the public event with an 'unhomely' glow" ("World" 143). Most critical attention turns to Bhabha's translation of Freud's uncanny/*unheimlich* as unhomely, but I want to call attention to his emphasized "*unconsciousness*." We have a process of repression in discourse here, where the postcolonial subject acts as the unconscious materials that resurface in the "unhomely." Through Freud's "cultural unconscious" (Bhabha, *Location* 136), Bhabha develops the cultural 'unhomely' in the discourse of colonial power, much akin to the unconscious positivity that forms Said's latent Orientalism, like Freud's latent content in a dream (Said, *Orientalism* 206).

In contrast, we will find that Durrell and Miller's project works against that of the talking cure and this postcolonial unknown. Their use of the unknown to create a state of readiness for Truth does not make the unconscious conscious, and it is contrary to a symptomatic approach to reading. As Miller argues, "the exploration of the unknown yields only the known" while "Truth…. comes instantaneously, without search…. It comes to you as a gift" (Durrell, "Studies" 47). This unknown does not oppose the postcolonial, and in many instances I argue both Durrell and Miller use irony in arguments akin to those of postcolonial critics, insofar as they are critics of Empire and colonial knowing. However, their 'unknown' is a different matter even if it prompts the reader toward projects akin to those above.

The distinction arises in the signified of these unknowns. A central question for Freud and psychoanalysis in general is how the analysand (the person under analysis) can come to know the unconscious. As Freud puts it in his *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, "the therapeutic efforts of psycho-analysis… [are intended] to strengthen the ego, to widen its field of perception and enlarge its organization, so that it can appropriate fresh portions of the id" (99-100). In the sense of what we have just covered, this would imply disrupting the censorship that provokes the projection over the Other. It also suggests having an awareness of the contents of this projection, which leads to an attempt at discourse with the Other.

This leads Freud to his famous comment, "Where id was, there shall ego be" (100). Psychoanalysis aims to displace and excavate the unconscious by the conscious ego, and the unconscious is the *Unbewusste*, literally the unknown. Hence, at the heart of Freudian psychoanalysis is the exploration of the unknown and replacement of it with the conscious ego. This ties the hermeneutic reading method of analysis back to the Unknown and making the unconscious conscious. Literally, the *Unbewusste* becomes the *Bewusste*, the Unknown into the Known.

Miller's statement that the exploration of the Unknown yields only the known seems, at first, akin to Freud's and perhaps even a literal translation. The exploration of the unconscious leads to the conscious, or "where the id was, there shall ego be." However, Miller's articulation rests on "only." In his frame of reference, the analytic exploration of the unconscious *only* reflects the conscious materials, and the unconscious remains untouched. The reader may receive Truth, but the exploration of the unknown can only (at best) prepare the reader to receive it. Finding the known in the unknown is not related to this Truth, so if the aims of psychoanalysis are read in a parallel, bringing the Ego into the Id is beside the point: "the readiness is all" (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* V.ii 219).

Miller and Durrell's project is antithetical to Freud's in specific ways. Insofar as their unknown aligns with Freud's unconscious, they would argue for a more self-reflexive awareness of how this process of exploration works, yet it ultimately allows the unknown to remain unknown since the advances we make into it are illusory. Durrell's and Miller's *Unbewusste*, and the unconscious of their texts, is therefore not an unknown that is *not yet* illuminated. Rather, it is an absence, a gap. Their unknown (unconscious) is a gap that prompts exploration yet remains outside of the discovery. Rather than a tomb to an Unknown Soldier, wherein lies the body of one who is forgotten or not yet identified, their Unknown would signal an empty space without remains.

Furthermore, Durrell wrote the introduction to the English translation of Groddeck's *Book of the It*, and the year before his 1949 *Horizon* article on Miller, he wrote in the same "Studies in Genius" series on Groddeck (Durrell, "Studies in Genius: Groddeck" 384-403).

This distinction with regard to the It and Unconscious is the immediate precursor to his re-articulation of Miller's project in these terms. Contrasting Groddeck's unexplored Unknown with Freud's continuously displaced Unconscious points to the project behind Durrell's argument that the *aporetic* 'unknown' is key to Miller's work. Their unknown is not something in the process of becoming conscious. Instead, it is not there, and its absence prompts the reader to the state of readiness to receive Truth.

In Durrell's copy of Groddeck's *The Unknown Self*, held at the University of Victoria, he has marked a passage and marginally written "marvelous":

> All your thoughts are subjective, determined by a force outside your control, a force you do not know but which knows you, and takes a delight in mocking at your vanity, your It. Do not give any diagnosis, for it will generally be a dis-diagnosis; but if you must diagnose, make it as simple and as general as you can. (Groddeck, *The Unknown Self* 88)

Using this framework to confront the *Unbewusste* in which the It resides, the mockery for exploration of the Unknown/Unconscious becomes more apparent. We do not achieve a clearer sense of the unknown so much as we deceive ourselves as we cover it over. By giving the gap characteristics, we do not explore it so much as we deny the existence of the gap. In line with Nietzsche's use of "It," from which Groddeck derives his own, the problem revolves around the gap of the "I," which does not reside where it is expected, so it must be sought out in the It. Looking for the Self in thought and the unknown, however, leads only to the absence of the Self. This is much like Nietzsche in that the "old famous 'I' is... only a supposition, an assertion" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 83).

This leads to my last parallel notion of the unknown, John Keats' Negative Capability. In his famous 1817 letter to his brothers, Keats outlines how

> several things dove-tailed in my mind, and at once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement, especially in Literature, and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously—I mean Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. (Keats 370)

In many respects, this draws us closer to Durrell and Miller's notion. Rather than displacing and exploring the unknown or the unconscious, Keats calls for the capacity to 'be' in uncertainties and mysteries, and this seems to be distinctly oriented towards texts. Keats' notion is closer to the role of the reader, and while he refers to authors, it is on his reader that he places the burden of "being" in uncertainties, as opposed to the author who can create them through distant metaphors or poetic contradictions.

Durrell and Miller begin with a reader who is still caught up in the "irritable reaching after fact and reason," but they educate him or her toward a state of Negative Capability through the cynosure of the gap. It is didactic. Durrell and Miller are also after something different insofar as they are not searching for the complex metaphors or contrasts that Keats establishes in his "still unravish'd bride of quietness" who leads only to "what wild ecstasy" (Keats 288) in a single stanza. Their unknown is not this kind of continuity in contrasts or the mindset that allows one to elide binaries, holding opposites in tandem. Instead, Durrell and Miller put the reader in a position of recognizing the process involved in such reading, especially when it confronts a gap, paradox, or ambiguity.

To read Durrell slightly against the grain in a short excerpt, but very much dovetailed with his position as a whole, we can note his argument for the active reader of Miller's writings:

> Miller, in the same context, replied to a criticism of mine thus: 'You keep bellyaching about form. I'm against the form that's imposed from the outside, the dead structure. My books represent *germination* in all its phases.'
>
> 'Germination', the word is a key to many of the intentions of Miller in his writings; it is the key to what Miller feels himself to be—*a fecundating force* expressing itself through writing, not a 'literary man' or an 'artist'. The distinction is worth underlining for the shape and colour of this writer's work is dictated by his attitude to art. (Durrell, "Studies" 45; emphasis added)

This draws out an intriguing function for the literary text: that of germination, which is not the same as a medium of communication[18]. Such a position leaves the reader with a great deal of freedom in the interpretive act of reading, such that the text prompts readings, but it does not collapse the available interpretations through a form of resolution or closure. This is the function Durrell ascribes to Miller's texts: fertilizing the reader's imaginative gap-filling and resolutions of the 'unknown.' It is even a slip the reader finds in Durrell's and Alfred Perlès' discussion of Miller in *Art and Outrage: A Correspondence About Henry Miller* where Perlès slowly shifts with each revision from letter, to typescript, to corrected proof: "if you fertilize me," "if I am fertilized," and finally "if I am fertile" (University of Victoria Perlès fonds n.pag).

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[18] I should also acknowledge the Romantic element of this statement, where Miller's "*germination*" is similar to Coleridge's "organic form." While the neo-Romantic elements of Durrell and Miller are not my main concern, and previous critics have pointed to this already, it is an affinity worth keeping in mind. For instance, see Brelet's "A Little Oriented Toward the Romantics" (125-131) and Kermode's "Romantic Agonies" (51-55). Biographers have noted Miller's aversion to most poetry, especially in his youth, but Durrell certainly was familiar with the Romantics and often alludes to Coleridge, Keats, and Blake in particular, so his choice of this moment in Miller to cite is loaded. It is also worthwhile to point out Durrell's selecting and introducing an anthology of Wordsworth, *Wordsworth; Selected by Lawrence Durrell*, an author he quotes in the epigram to his final novel: "...must itself create the taste by which it is to be judged..." (*Quintet* 1176).

Furthermore, Durrell locates germination, not communication, as the purpose of the text[19]. He also distinguishes between germination and fecundation in one of his personal letters to George Seferis, the Nobel Prize winning Greek poet. Durrell notes that his prolific output in Alexandria (for the *Personal Landscapes* journal, translating Greek authors, and his own *Prospero's Cell*) is not tied to his ability "to issue or develop, to produce" ("germinate" 2.b):

> I am copying out the 3 recitations from Άνατολγ́ [Anatoli, Turkey] so you'll be in good translating company ; now about the Sekilianos. Are you really going to produce it?.... If not cannot I have the text photostatted here? And cannot we include him in our DISTINGUISHED REFUGEES SECTION? I have started things moving and everybody is busy on the different sections.... Meanwhile I am trying to work connectedly at a little book about Greek landscape λιγξ Κερκγρα [Corfu] and its scenery.... But still on[e] has not enough time to be idle and germinate - the important thing. (Letter to George Seferis n.pag)

This small repetition of terms points to a distinction Durrell finds important to his own and Miller's works: communication as secondary to instigation.

Miller likewise comments on this element of his writings directly in "Reflections on Writing":

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[19] This is a view Miller echoes in his discussion of D. H. Lawrence: "The only way to do justice to a man like [Lawrence] who gave so much, is to give another creation. Not explain him, but prove by writing about him that one has caught the flame he tried to pass on" (24). The image of the flame repeats frequently as the dominant image of the first chapter as well.

> I obey only my own instincts and intuitions. I know nothing in advance. Often I put down things which I do not understand myself, secure in the knowledge that later they will become clear and meaningful to me. I have faith in the man who is writing, who is myself, the writer. (Miller, "Reflections on Writing" 109)

This locates the 'truth' of the text or its interpretation as something provisional and distinct from authorial intent. Instead, it is *in* the reader (he has faith in the writer but things only become "clear and meaningful" when he becomes a reader), which in turn leads him to argue, "Understanding is not a piercing of the mystery, but an acceptance of it, a living blissfully with it, in it, through and by it" (109). While the potential for an allusive reference to Keats' Negative Capability is strong and an ability to "dwell in opposites" would seem necessary.[20] Nevertheless, Miller is still searching after the self-knowledge revealed in the resolutions or concretizations he brings about when reading his own texts. The text is the parapraxis in which self-discovery is construed. This draws attention to the reader's active engagement in the process of constructing the reading that will be "clear and meaningful," regardless of authorial intention. It is also implicit in Durrell's reframing of Miller's comment on the unknown, changing it from self-exploration to the reader's construction during reading.

Durrell's comments also connect this 'finding' of the familiar in the unknown with the openness of the text to the reader:

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[20] It is also particularly appropriate to Durrell's repeated allusions to Keats, both through the character of Keats in the *Alexandria Quartet* (Skordili, "Owed on a Grecian Urn" n.pag), but also in poetic allusions in *The Revolt of Aphrodite* (Gifford, "Durrell's *The Revolt*" 119).

> Unless we are prepared to admit that this type of creative man [ie: Miller] is *making use* of his art in order to grow by it, in order to expand the domains of his own sensibility, we will be unable to profit by what he has to offer us, which is the vicarious triumph of *finding ourselves* in reading him. (Durrell, "Studies" 45; emphasis original)

Durrell's emphasis reiterates his reframing of Miller in terms of readers reading, though it qualifies the reader's discoveries as "vicarious." So long as the reader remains cognizant of the availability of a range of interpretations, the text remains subject to the reader's self-discovery. Durrell forcefully places this as the profitable way to read, which should be specifically desired: germination versus communication. Naturally, if the text offers self-discovery[21], then the peculiarities and striking elements found in such discoveries derive from the reader's impositions or projections.

For these reasons, Bolton's recent argument in an article oriented toward exploring his own role as reader of *The Alexandria Quartet* is particularly apt:

> For Durrell, truth and meaning are relative to the seeker of truth; love and passion are relative to the lover; and finally, the meaning, the passion, the truth of any work, and particularly the truth of his *Quartet*, is relative to the reader. Durrell would not be the least bit surprised that his work is inextricably bound to my sweltering balcony in north Texas, for he believes that his work, like the beloved to the lover, is a mirror, throwing back the reflection of the observer. (Bolton 8)

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[21] There is, however, a contradiction here in that both Durrell and Miller reject the notion of the stable ego, so any self-discovery is going to partake of the same reading process as is identified in the text.

This statement is equally significant for readings of Miller's works. Both authors are intent on bringing the reader to a self-conscious awareness of how the text becomes "inextricably bound to [something personal, such as a reader's] sweltering balcony in north Texas" (8). The text has a function that is distinct from, though engaged with, the reader's 'knowns' or 'familiarities.' When the reader is made to confront his or her additions to and constructions of the work during the process of reading, this recognition is paired with the exploration of the 'unknown' or moments in the text that allow for, prompt, or even necessitate the reader's active elaboration of the materials in hand.

In a passage that is at the heart of this dissertation, Durrell first quotes and then later reframes Miller in order to clarify what is at stake in this issue of the 'unknown.' He reinterprets Miller in order to grant a critical approach to his texts:

> "Of course I am against the known... When you say that Knowledge is my great Bugaboo, you are absolutely right. But to go on and say that I detest science, metaphysics, religion, etc.—sticking one's finger into the Unknown, as you say—because I might bring up something horrible, *the truth*, that is not true. The fact is that truth is not arrived at that way. The exploration of the unknown yields only the known. We discover only what we set out to find, nothing more.... All this is nonsense to you, I know... It's just a piece of mysticism, if you like, which keeps me gay and fit. The unknown is constant and the advances we make into it are illusory. I love the unknown precisely because it is a 'beyond,' because it *is* impenetrable" (Durrell, "Studies" 47-48, quoting Miller, *Hamlet* 356; emphasis original).

These notions are further aligned with unresolved ambiguity when Durrell quotes Miller and then argues:

> "Whatever I was, whatever I was engaged in, I was leading multiple lives." And this sense of *multiple meaning* [sic] is admirably conveyed by his writing which follows ideas and memories down long labyrinths on images, long *couloirs*, of darkness, corridors full of shattered prisms. Miller's world is a world seen through a prism. It glitters indeed with a wild prismatic beauty. (Durrell, "Studies" 57; underlining added, italicization original)

In that this "multiple meaning" is prismatic, and not only such, but fragmented in its prismatic nature, it functions in the position of the 'unknown' that the two authors refer to. It is impenetrable and disruptive to the reader's imposition of closure on this multiplicity by returning attention to this readerly imposition on the text. It also relates to the conflict between the non-fiction assertions of a fictional text about 'real' things and places, as well as unresolved ambiguities that prevent closure, such as the ambiguity of sexual, racial, and national categories in Durrell's and Miller's works.

The examples later in this dissertation of what the reader's attention is drawn to cover a broad range: for instance, the assumption of selfhood for characters; the acceptance of openly contradicted ethnic stereotypes in travel literature; both authors' challenges to heterosexist presumption; the slow dissolution of the assumed discrete ego behind names or identities in general (even so far as to blend characters into each other); ongoing intertextual contradictions with regard to landscapes and cityscapes that allow for ethnic stereotypes and expectations of exoticism; and the integration of this approach into Durrell's and Miller's affiliations with alternative movements within Modernism.

iii. Durrell's Aporetic, Colonial Corfu

Both authors seem keenly aware of the relationship between projection and this filling of blanks, and the texts return attention to the most pronounced moments where this technique is evidenced. The nature of my analysis is not one focused on a naive intention of somehow correcting historical injustices that are now largely forgotten but that are creatively reflected (as in Perseus' shield) in literary discussions of Greece. This is an approach already seen in postcolonial readings of Durrell's representations of Egypt[22], where there is a sense of needing to correct inaccuracies in works of fiction, as in Manzalaoui's works and several Egyptian responses to Philhellenic approaches to Alexandria.[23] This is further complicated by the in-between position of Alexandria, bearing its Greek heritage in its name (or perhaps its Macedonian heritage, with many Greeks insisting on the distinction between colonizer and colonized) while discussions of this heritage are dismissed through postcolonial frameworks as neo-imperial. To most such work that has discussed Durrell, it is his Philhellenism that poses a problem, since privileging the Hellenic history of Alexandria troubles the autonomy of the Arabic heritage. Hence, Durrell's ironic representations of the remnants of the British Empire in Egypt are taken up as naively sincere.[24]

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[22] The International Lawrence Durrell Society, in cooperation with the University of Alexandria, has just released the proceedings of its 1996 conference in Alexandria, *Durrell In Alexandria*. While my focus is not on postcolonial readings of Durrell's discussions of Egypt, the volume does contain the most extensive and varied collection of Egyptian responses to Durrell's works to date. Sahar Hamouda's "The Figure of the Copt in Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* and Edwar Al-Kharrat's *City of Saffron* and *Girls of Alexandria*" (100-110) and Mona Mones' "The Egyptian People in Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*" (112-122) are exemplary analyses of the colonial elements of Durrell's works. The majority of the volume's collected papers focus on the relationship between Durrell's novel series and the colonial history of the city and people its depicts.

[23] Manzalaoui initiated postcolonial readings of Durrell with his 1963 "The Curate's Egg," which notes inconsistencies between Durrell's descriptions of Alexandria and a chronologically accurate history of the city. Manzalaoui is also mis-spelled as Manzaloui in several publications. Manzalaoui seems to have adjusted his position slightly nearly twenty years later. Despite his otherwise positive description of Durrell in "Curate's Egg," his difficulty lies in Durrell's inaccuracies when representing Alexandria. His 1980 review of Jane Lagoudis Pinchin's *Alexandria Still: Forster, Durrell, and Cavafy* instead points to "the grid-plan of Alexandria streets… [versus] Durrell's untrue picture of Alexandria as 'radiating out like the arms of a starfish' from the Soma: a small point, but a strong signal that Durrell's city is a subjective one, and that any treatment which does not take account of this is a divagation" (375).

Edward Said himself has laid the groundwork for this approach and has made a well-known comment on Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* playing a more symbolic than literary role:

> The degree to which the cultural realm and its expertise are institutionally divorced from their real connections with power was wonderfully illustrated.... I was naively trying to understand the kind of person who could order b-52 strikes over a distant Asian country... "You know," my friend said, "the Secretary is a complex human being: he doesn't fit the picture you may have formed of the cold-blooded imperialist murderer. The last time I was in his office I noticed Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* on his desk." He paused meaningfully, as if to let Durrell's presence on that desk work its awful power alone.... What the anecdote illustrates is the approved separation of high-level bureaucrat from the reader of novels of questionable worth and definite status. ("Secular" 220-221)

To this anecdote[25], Said adds the damning endnote: "The example of the Nazi who read Rilke and then wrote out genocidal orders to his concentration-camp underlings had not yet become well known. Perhaps then the Durrell-Secretary of Defense anecdote might not have seemed so useful to my enthusiastic friend" (462). Apart from transforming Durrell into the American Secretary of Defense, this reading necessitates that Durrell (to be damned) must be sincere in this text and the reader must be naïve, such as Lionel Trilling's repetition of Durrell's errors with the Copts[26]. In fact, rather than separating the "bureaucrat from the reader of novels," the suggestion seems more accurately to be that the two overlap: the official is *not* distinct from the novel reader, and the hesitations and provisionalities of one bleed into the other. What Said seems to have missed is that Rilke is hardly damned in his second anecdote, while damning Durrell is certainly the insinuation of his own. It is the reader whose reputation harms the author, rather than the author's reputation that casts ill-repute on his readership.

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[24] For more examples, see Anthony Hirst and Michael Silk's edited volume *Alexandria: Real and Imagined*. In order to reject neo-colonial view of Egypt, Alexandria's cosmopolitan and especially its Greek history is dismissed or evaded. Approaching a similar problem, I have discussed postcolonial approaches to Anglo-American Philhellenism and postcolonial dismissals of this problem (Gifford, "Hellenism Between Orient and Occident?" 115-124). One such difficulty I point out is that representations of Greece by the Philhellene create the schema by which Greece is translated abroad, and such schemas justify, proliferate, and perpetuate political actions. Hellenism, thus, is that inscribing and defining tradition just as surely as Said's is Orientalism. Yet, Said avoids discussing Hellenism, mentioning it only a handful of times in *Orientalism*—mainly as a way of distinguishing between scholars and to excuse the Hellenist. Said does not refer to Hellenism at all in *Culture and Imperialism*.

Mustapha Marrouchi clarifies Said's intentions in this anecdote by turning attention to Said's desire to correct Durrell's misrepresentations of Egypt. Marrouchi recounts Said's only recorded sustained comments on Durrell, given during a year he spent in Beirut learning Arabic:

> One evening at Beirut College for Women, [Said] addressed a large assembly on a prize work of the Orientalist canon, Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*. Many of the Westerners in the room imagined themselves Durrellian heroes in a latter-day Alexandria of intrigue and romance. Said attacked the

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[25] This anecdote is remarkably similar to Terry Eagleton's parallel sighting of Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* on his friend Greenway's mantle, "no doubt to demonstrate his entirely non-existent openness to the new" (Eagleton, *Gatekeeper* 170).

[26] Hamouda, who also praises Durrell's awareness of the political conflicts in Egypt (100), points to Durrell's reliance on a factually incorrect description in "S. H. Leeder's *Modern Sons of the Pharoahs: A Study of the Manners and Customs of the Copts of Egypt* for his description of [Narouz's] funeral.... The readiness with which the West accepts Durrell's descriptions is exemplified by Lionel Trilling's comment that "ancient ways and the ancient peoples are before our eyes... for example, the days long mourning of Narouz Hosnani" (Hamouda 108; quoting Trilling 61).

> novel's triviality, its incomprehensible metaphors, its meaningless plot.... [O]ne university lecturer protested that Durrell's images were compelling. "Compelling?" Said asked. "When he needs an image for human communication, he reaches for the [64] telephone" (1975: 234)[27]. As an almost doctrinaire secularist, Said is hardly swayed by an argument or hobbled by a rigid approach. (Marrouchi 63-64)

This presents several problems that typify postcolonial readings of Durrell. First, the "incomprehensible metaphors" being dismissed seem to be attacked precisely because they are too comprehensible: the telephone as a metaphor for human communication (though it is tempting to note if one sees the word 'metaphor' in Modern Greek, it likely refers to a courier). Moreover, while the political purpose behind this attack (to correct politically charged misrepresentations that carry political influences) remains laudable, it is difficult for a reader of Durrell's novel to view his cast of Western characters as heroes in any form, unless one dispenses with the prominent ironies. The Westerners' imagination of themselves as Durrell's characters (pederasts, homosexuals, poverty-stricken and sexually humiliated tutors, incestuous authors, or politicians blind to the machinations around them) seems highly unlikely in the cultural climate of 1972. In contrast, the only reader I am aware to have voiced this feeling of wonder for the heavily Orientalist Alexandria refers instead to the film version of Durrell's *Quartet* (Cuckor's 1969 *Justine*), which has received nearly universally terrible reviews, and this reader is neither Western nor an Orientalist: M. G. Vassanji ("The

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[27] The referenced work is not included in the book's bibliography, but is in fact Said's notes for the speech, kept unpublished among his private papers.

Boy" 1-3). The enviable heroes of the film, where they appear quite dapper in stark contrast to the novel, seem far more likely than those of the novel.

The difficulty, instead, seems to be that when he is read without irony, Durrell (like Conrad) becomes a prime exemplar of imperial propaganda and Orientalist fantasy. Furthermore, Said does not take Durrell up with the same care with which he examines Conrad (such a study would be enviable), and this seems to be the reason why he later buried his discussions of Durrell: as "a prize work of the Orientalist canon" (Mustapha 23). It would seem odd for Said not to discuss it in *Orientalism* unless its prominent irony proved problematic, especially given the great popularity Durrell enjoyed at that point in time. Perhaps even more difficult is Durrell's express Philhellenism, which casts his Alexandria through the rose coloured glass of a Homeric rosy-fingered dawn—it is Greek in origin and would never be fully Arab in his vision, and hence it runs contrary to Arab or Muslim forms of Egyptian nationalism. In fact, it is now common to find Greek-oriented descriptions of Alexandria's history or explorations of its Greek minority labeled 'Orientalist' and 'Imperial,' which ignores the culturally diverse nature of the city prior to the 1960s when nationalist pressures exerted a more Egyptian (ie: Muslim and Arab) vision of the city and populace.

Said himself perpetuates this presentation of Philhellenism as anti-Arab, and hence disregards the long Greek history in Egypt, when he uses Hellenic Studies as a way of excusing some scholars from his view of Orientalism. Yet, insofar as Orientalism "has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world" (Said, *Orientalism* 12), so too is Hellenism a construct used to gain knowledge, and thereby power, over the Greek world, since "to have... knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it" (Said, *Orientalism* 32). Said's argument stands, but his limitation of the argument to a specific issue (for political purposes) falls.

In this context, it is telling to find that Said separated his discussion of Durrell from his contemporaneous work for which it would have been both topical and appropriate. This suggests that closer attention made such black and white divisions difficult for him to perpetuate in this instance, or that the layers of ironies complicated the situation. Nonetheless, this attention to inaccurate representations in works of fiction (which, albeit, can and do forward political and social ends) continues to dominate discussions of Durrell's 'spirit of place.' His images of Greece, no less than his images of Egypt, are taken up under the presumption of accuracy and naive realism, leaving aside irony and resistance to imperial power.

For further discussion of Said's work in relation to Durrell, see my "Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* and Colonial Knowing: Implicating Friedrich Nietzsche and Edward Said" (95-112). Using Durrell's colonial novel, and demonstrating its reflections of Nietzsche's philosophy, I critique the narrow *application* of postcolonial criticism, done without a sense of its epistemological assumptions, which often happens with critical work on Durrell. To make this point, my article focuses on Said's *Orientalism* and the textual veracity a reader must assume in order for Said's critique to work well. This is in contrast to the skepticism of Durrell's Nietzschean interests. Michael Diboll's *Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet In Its Egyptian Contexts* is largely based on Said's perspective as well, though it focuses on the political allusions in Durrell's novel series rather than its form and philosophical underpinnings. Also, Diboll's "The Secret History of Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*: The Mountolive-Hosnani Affair, Britain, and the Wafd" (79-105) elucidates the veracity of the Coptic ties to Palestine, which postcolonial critics have otherwise dismissed as "ridiculous" (Manzalaoui 148). Diboll demonstrates, in this chapter and his book, Durrell's familiarity with the repressed and forgotten ties between the Copts and Palestine in World War II and Egypt's internal conflict over the formation of Israel. The point is that Durrell's "ridiculous" misrepresentation of Egypt, in fact, reveal a censored history of Wafd, Coptic, and Jewish collaboration, which reflects Durrell's awareness of publicly-denied Egyptian politics.

Marylin Papayanis has recently taken this approach to Durrell's Greece through comparison to the more standard postcolonial subjects of study, Michael Ondaatje and Isak Dinesen. She ultimately describes Durrell's poetic ethics as compromised by his economic expatriation (*Writing* 35). Durrell, for her, misrepresents Greek peasants in favour of a colonialist mindset that leads him to "typify and caricature" (57), as well as to "indulge in a certain amount of Orientalist quotation," although her elision of 'Philhellenic' to 'Orientalist' only highlights the importance of distinguishing between the two in Durrell's works. This is especially so since he typically examines points of contact between Greece, the West, and the East: Venetian Corfu; Rhodes' repatriation to Greece after World War II and its Ottoman past; the Greek and Western elements of pre-war Alexandria; and Cyprus' struggle for union with Greece (ENOSIS) while under British rule and prior to the Turkish occupation. Naturally, in these contact zones where the Same, the Other, and hybrid variation thereof come into dialogue with each other, projection becomes a more pressing, domestic issue than it is in a psychoanalytic approach to a work of fiction.

If not instead, at least in addition to this series of postcolonial approaches begun by Manzalaoui and Said, which aims to uncover the latent Orientalism in the text, the reader should turn his or her attention to how the structure of the 'unknown' (the didactic return of the text to the resolved ambiguity or filled gaps) allows for yet another complexity in Durrell and Miller's works. As the reader discovers, closely comparing Durrell's Greek texts to the physical sites depicted draws out inconsistencies that are too striking to be accounted for as an ideological schema latent in the author's mind. The reader's expectations are allowed to create extensive sections of the text.

Few landscapes can make as strong a claim to visible colonial influences as the island of Corfu in Greece. 'Beautified' by a replica of the Rue de Rivoli, kindly donated by the French, two Venetian fortresses (and a Venetian cityscape), British government buildings and a church, and even an Austrian mansion, Corfu unambiguously offers up a cosmopolitan palimpsest of urban landscapes to countless tourists every year. This overlaying of histories, cultures, architectures, and even personal experiences is the crux of Durrell's pilgrimage tale, "Oil for the Saint; Return to Corfu" (1966), which is itself a kind of palimpsest over his earlier book *Prospero's Cell* (1945), and predecessor to *Blue Thirst* (1975). The middle work, "Oil for the Saint," describes ostensibly biographical events in the 1960s, while the earliest draws on invented diaries and persons in the 1930s. The third is an amalgamation of the two, derived from Durrell's Caltech lectures. The result is three works of 'bio-historical-fiction' that ambiguously cover the material actuality of the island and claim veracity while ironically denying their own claim to realism.

Durrell, as the 'returning native' ("Oil" 286), subverts the colonial mindset that allows him to define and delineate a foreign landscape for foreign readers, while nonetheless engaging in an attempt at reconciliation—a pilgrimage quite literally—between his various adopted 'homes.' By closely examining the Corfiot landscape and biographical information about Durrell's actual 'homeward journey' in 1964, we discover Durrell ironically 'dupes' the trusting reader into a series of logical fallacies and material misconceptions. By performing the role of the colonial traveler meekly fulfilling his conciliatory pilgrimage to an imagined home and real shrine, Durrell's narrator (who goes by Durrell's name) gives a disturbingly exact rendition of the tourist-reader's expectations of such a voyage and locale, even to the point of creating obvious contradictions that are, tellingly, difficult to perceive. For instance, he repeatedly emphasizes that his conversations are in Greek yet they are transcribed in pidgin English. After these repetitions make the disjunction pressing enough, the reader must ask how he or she could have accepted the stereotypically broken English. It implicates the reader's bias and expectations. In so doing, the text subverts the travel magazine reader's easy acceptance of travel narratives as a means to 'knowing' a place or people while it leaves the reader with an uncanny perception of himself or herself mirrored in the foreign 'deus loci.'[28]

Furthermore, Durrell's place in colonial literatures is debated and currently seems to be undergoing a critical transformation. As positions are taken, clearer readings of 'Durrell the colonial' take up their viable arguments[29] while at the same time articles and conference papers are appearing that use Durrell's ironic voices to subvert the stereotypic colonial text[30]. To an extent, this kind of conflict comes naturally to an author with Durrell's confused nationality and political history, being a British official but not a British citizen and an apolitical author writing oddly political books (Durrell, *Bitter Lemons* ix). Irony is the key point here, and Durrell's ironic representations of Empire are too often taken as sincere, whether it is the most typical Middle Eastern or Indian postcolonial focus, or in this case Greek.[31] Moreover, his works are rich in colonial exoticism, denunciations of Empire, and narrative techniques based on the juxtaposition of limited perspectives. While my purpose is not to give a summary or conclusion to this critical debate, nor to suggest that Durrell's intentions can or should be stated with any degree of certainty, this does not mean that his texts are not without effects independent of any supposed intentions, nor that such effects cannot be discussed on their own. For these reasons, "Oil for the Saint" is unique, and this short pilgrimage genre is not common in Durrell's oeuvre.

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[28] See Durrell's poem "Deus Loci" (*Collected Poems* 214-217).

[29] For example, see Terry Eagleton's review of the recent biography on Durrell by MacNiven, "The Supreme Trickster; *Lawrence Durrell: A Biography*" (48-49), Soad Sobhy's "The Fabulator's Perspective on Egypt in *The Alexandria Quartet*" (85-96), and Mary Massoud's "Mahfuz's *Miramar*: A Foil to Durrell's *Quartet*" (91-101). I might add, however, that Terry Eagleton seems to have revised his opinion while attending a seminar on "Oil for the Saint," though his general antagonism to Durrell as an author remains.

[30] Representative works include Paul Lorenz's "From Pub Story to a Story of Civilization: The Evolution of Lawrence Durrell's Egypt" (39-52), James Gifford's "Forgetting a Homeless Colonial" (n.pag) and "The Corfiot Landscape and Lawrence Durrell's Pilgrimage" (181-196), and Salwa Ghaly's excellent "Durrell's and Istrati's Alexandria" (1-13).

To explain these contradictory elements and Durrell's complicated relationship with Empire, I will 'tour' the text to emphasize its relationship to factual places and the nature of the reader's exploration of both text and place (i.e. the text is still used by tour operators, which demonstrates that its connectedness to the sites it depicts is still practical and very real[32]). The story, however, encourages the reader to create an imaginary land, or to imaginatively recreate familiar terrain, hence acting as a tour guide, but with what appears to be the tangential purpose of castigating tourists. I have, moreover, seen the text in question used as a tour guide many times, as a biographical source, and a means to claiming knowledge of the sites it describes—for this reason, my analysis is based doubly on the work's literary playfulness with the pilgrimage-travel genre and its role as a mockingly deceptive performance of the colonial tradition. This play and performance subverts the expectations of the travel narrative genre, going so far as to make direct contradictions and to use carefully established bilingual references that subvert the reader's expectations of accurate representations in what are presented as statements of fact. In other words, the story is rife with contradictions, ironies, and subversions of its own surface meanings. Hence, the text's use of the stereotypical conventions of the colonial travel narrative mocks these conventions and their acceptance by the readership.

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[31] As with the works referenced in the previous two footnotes, this problem with irony reflects critical tensions in postcolonial studies, which inform but are not the topic of discussion here. With regard to Edward Said's work, irony is disturbing, yet Said's is the most commonly applied paradigm for Durrell given their common focus on the Middle East. Said's paradigm still applies insofar as the text has effects regardless of its irony, which I have already referred to through Trilling's perpetuation of inaccurate representations of the Copts (Hamouda 106). Although, this makes a textual analysis less viable than a reader response study since the main point is reception and its political effects. Said, in general, relies on a text's sincere bias (despite his other work on Conrad), and this assumes an author's intentions, yet intentionality is typically removed from such analyses. In general, discussions of ironic colonial representations of Empire receive less attention, perhaps because they do not really serve the point of this form of criticism. Of course, the opportunity for irony resides in the prevalence of the stereotypes and biases that the reader must take for granted in order to have them spoken ironically—the assumption of sincerity must exist before the addition of satire. For recent work in this area, see Michael Diboll's *Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet In Its Egyptian Contexts*. For dissenting views, see Francis and Ghaly.

Furthermore, the concept of the palimpsest unifies levels in the text separated by the narrator's irony: textual layers where the colonial 'genre' performs, the text alludes to its fellows, and the reader encounters an unsettling re-enactment of real and imagined landscapes. Likewise, while the literal palimpsest in the manuscript is engaging[33], Durrell's portrait is of landscape and *its* relationship to a *figurative* palimpsest where archaeological layers compile and texts sit over this material actuality. This particular *notion* of the palimpsest turns the reader's attention back to that which cannot be excavated and hence the censored unknown that is implicit in the 'unvoiced' or 'unsaid.' This is akin to Durrell's

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[32] For instance, see Hilary Whitton Paipetti's *In the Footsteps of Lawrence Durrell and Gerald Durrell in Corfu (1935-39)*.

[33] It is also possible to extend this idea by noting the extensive revisions to the manuscript as it is held in Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

Bitter Lemons where the dense political context is only rendered as "better leave the rest unsaid" to "keep its calms like tears unshed" (272). The unvoiced and unsaid likewise draws attention to the problem of speaking, and Durrell seems to have been a step ahead of his contemporaries—he neither asserts the Greek cannot speak, in Spivak's sense, nor does he take up the position of speaking for the Greek. Instead, the ironical presumption of representing the Corfiot is made palpable and becomes more pressing as Kerkira's role in the story develops.

Given the key role of palimpsests in Durrell's two larger works, the *Alexandria Quartet* and the *Avignon Quintet*, it is an obvious concept to take to the short story that falls between them in Durrell's chronology. In both texts, various palimpsests are topics of discussion for the characters, and the novels themselves enact palimpsest-like reworkings of themselves. This makes the concept an explicit concern. In line with the layering of texts, Durrell makes the significant claim at the beginning of "Oil for the Saint" that

> This island was where I first met Greece, learned Greek, lived like a fisherman, made my home with a peasant family. Here too I had made my first convulsive attempts on literature, learned to sail, been in love. Corfu would have too much to live up to. ("Oil" 287)

"Peasant" is not necessarily as derogatory as one would think in a postcolonial context (think of Greek peasant salad), although Durrell's choice of the word is telling insofar as it reflects his sense of audience. More important is the last line of this passage; if "Corfu would have too much to live up to" (287), then the reader is notified that there is a previous impression in the narrator's mind and this impression may even influence new perceptions that build on top of it. The reader, likewise, has such an idea of blue-domed Greek islands, and this impression remains, characteristically for Durrell, unvoiced in the text. This also suggests—and it soon becomes overt—that the aesthetic of the landscape is comparable to a work of art; Kalami "ha[s] a formal completeness" "whose confines were all there to be enjoyed and measured" ("Oil" 296).

Like visual art, the surface of the landscape of memory (or a real landscape) can be repainted, while like a palimpsest there is an inevitable, archaeological 'bleed-through' from one layer into another. Each layer partially covers the previous, but allows the reader to see its predecessor and its influence. Memory bleeds through into experience just as expectations shape the reading experience and the foundations of an older building can determine the dimensions of the new. Durrell often refers to the blurring of a watercolour to describe this effect. This specific notion of over-writing or using Corfu as a slate on which language or interpretively charged images are inscribed is a recurring trope in Durrell and Miller's works as a screen onto which the contents of something mirrored and indeterminate are projected, except that in this instance the screen of the colonized space is still visible, like in a palimpsest.

Using a double vision of the screen and the projection, this chapter juxtaposes Durrell's text against the fact of the place it depicts. In first binding the Durrells to Corfu, *Prospero's Cell*, along with his brother Gerald's *My Family and Other Animals*, secured a literary connection between the Durrell family and the landscape of Greece. Even the narrator's new experiences on Corfu and the action of "Oil for the Saint" constantly allude to the earlier texts, often assuming the reader is familiar with them. This memory is re-invoked but mixed with direct perception and representation:

> But now the town was approaching and here once more the early sunlight traversed to pick up the curves of the Venetian harbour, the preposterous curvilinear shapes of its belfries and balconies. We docked to the boom of the patron saint's bell—Saint Spyridon of holy memory. ("Oil" 288)

Significantly, like Durrell's own foreignness on the island, the patron saint mentioned here, Saint Spyridon, is also a foreigner. He was brought to the island after death and mummification, only to become a part of the 'native' landscape (Durrell, *Prospero's* 20-27). Corfu has long been a crossroads in the Mediterranean world, and Durrell's problematizing of the colonial implications of his own "return" must be put in this context in order to be fully appreciated. However, the omissions in the text, omissions of context, draw out the irony of the image of authenticity. The "belfries and balconies" tell the reader that this is not a Santorini-like Greek island, but one with a different architecture. In fact, the first lighted shape is the "*Venetian* harbour." In this way, Durrell anchors his story in the colonial history that is carved into the very rock of the island though this is, of course, unmentioned. This architecture makes the centuries of occupation, combat, and cultural hybridity as readable as his own text: a "preposterous" series of sights for a Greek island (288). Nevertheless, "the preposterous curvilinear shapes" suggest the difficulty with perception that is a hallmark of Durrell's ambiguities, prompting the reader to greater care in using the text as an informative travel narrative.

In his first specific mention of the colonial architecture of Corfu Town, Durrell again draws on the artistic metaphor he ties to memory. Moreover, this overview of the cityscape foregrounds the concept of the palimpsest:

> Though the town is a series of unfinished intentions, Venetian, French, British, it remains a masterpiece; I doubt if there is any little town as elegantly beautiful in the whole of Greece. Each nation in turn projected something grandiose to beautify it—and then fell asleep. ("Oil" 289)

These "unfinished intentions," a rather delicate phrase, reflect the numerous colonial occupations of Corfu, such as the Venetian Empire that controlled it for 401 years, as well as the French and the British Empires. Durrell's continually reworked notebooks and corrected proofs attest to his care here[34], so his choice of words on matters of political and aesthetic concerns should be examined closely. "Each nation in turn projected something... and then fell asleep" stands out in particular ("Oil" 289).

Given his interest in psychoanalysis, observable as early as his first novel in 1935, which betrays a careful reading of Freud, "projected" is a loaded word. This is especially so in the context of Durrell's delicate phrasing that censors the nasty details of colonial occupations. This notion is rich. What is projected onto the effaced screen of Greece in some way functions as a distorted reflection of that which must remain unknowable, that which is censored, and hence the only discovery on this *tabla rasa* is what we set out to find: i.e., the projection. Moreover, in the context of the cityscape itself, 'projection' is quite literally the matter at hand; the French have projected Paris onto their colony, the Venetians have done likewise, and the British have taken the more intriguing step of projecting a distinctly Anglo-Hellenic reconceptualization of Greece, architecturally, onto Greece itself.

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[34] See the Durrell collection (163) at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. The revisions of this text point to an effort far more focused than Durrell's more typical tourist magazine stories.

Furthermore, the narrator suggests that these colonizing nations have "beautified" the island. This allows the reader—presumably a Western and English-speaking *Holiday* magazine fan—to comfortably avoid the sullied (sallied?) political details hiding beneath the surface of the palimpsest of these admittedly lovely "unfinished intentions." Durrell had first-hand experience with the British colonial endeavour, being both an "Extravagant Stranger" to Britain, as Caryl Phillips classifies him (87-91), and an official in the British foreign office. His first novel, *Pied Piper of Lovers*, describes his childhood in India and irreconcilable conflict between national identities. Later, he abandoned his home and post on Cyprus under fear of death during ENOSIS, which with other incidents in Belgrade, Cairo, Alexandria, Athens, and Rhodes suggests that Durrell was not only familiar with the uncomfortable political details he chooses to censor—he was intimate with them. With "Oil for the Saint" written after his retirement from the British Foreign Office, the "beautifying" contention and the "falling asleep" of these colonizing nations sidestep the political affairs Durrell had considerable experience in and open distaste for. This obfuscation would then seem to indicate Durrell's awareness of his tourist audience and the needs of a travel magazine. This does, however, leave a gap for the reader between fact and fiction in a text that insinuates a historical context while never making it explicit.

Durrell's meandering reminiscences of the cityscape continue as his pilgrimage from sea to shrine progresses. He notes: "The Venetians fell asleep over the citadel, though they remembered to leave the winged lion there" ("Oil" 289), and this attests to an exploration of the New Fortress adjacent to the harbour where the Venetian emblem still guards the walls and gates. Notably, the citadel itself is British, added to the Venetian New Fortress, although both of Corfu Town's two forts bear the winged lion, so Durrell's lack of specificity may mislead the reader into a blurred cityscape where parallel streets may cross and 'relativistic' effects can be seen, as in his *Alexandria Quartet*. Also, as Durrell's first specific architectural reference, the fortress is informative; the purpose of the two intimidating fortresses in the Town is obvious and their contribution to the military history of the place is told all too clearly in their wounded exteriors. As, by far, the largest constructed features of the city, they make the most palpable statement about the colonizing powers that have 'slept' there and the force that such powers exercised in their restless doze.

It is difficult to discuss the colonial nature of an 'Anglo-Indian' feeling nostalgic over a landscape constructed in Greece by Italians since the *nostos* of nostalgia cannot refer to a 'home'; however, the 'nationality' of the place and its reclaiming of its colonial history is troubled by the stone relics littered about the landscape or that even make up the landscape itself. The Venetian fortress first attracted the population of the old city to the new location for sanctuary. The remains of the former Corfiot fortress and town remain in Paleopolis, a short walk south of the current city, and the pediment from the Temple of Artemis is on display in the Archaeological Museum in Corfu Town. The "Mother of Gorgons—beautiful stone relief in museum" (*Prospero's* 138), then housed in what is now the Asian Art museum, was "Larry[Durrell]'s favourite exhibit" (MacNiven 110). At first, the juxtaposition of the powerful Gorgon over the Temple of Artemis is the most striking concept, until the reader realizes that this structure came to ruins as a result of the various invasions and the desertion of the town in favour of the locations defended by the Venetian Fortress itself, which supplanted the old city. Furthermore, it was in the Old Fortress, under British Rule, that the Anglican Church of Saint George was constructed, but not under the sway of Gothic influences. Instead, an imitation of the temple of Artemis from Paleopolis is the best way to describe the resulting building, dedicated to Saint George the Dragon Killer, who stands in the archaeological palimpsest as the displacer of the Medusa with her coiled serpents. This Medusa functions like the symptom, visible only indirectly as a reflection that cannot be borne to be looked at directly, just as the colonial history of Corfu acts as the censored contents in Durrell's story (the repressed) while pointing the reader to recognize the role of projection in his or her reading. The gorgon can only be seen askance, just as the colonial history of Corfu is only referred to obliquely in the text, yet this symptom attracts attention to itself, leading the reader to recognize the colonial projection.

The layering of histories continues when Durrell mentions, "the French built half the Rue de Rivoli and then discontinued it" ("Oil" 289). As another site of colonial construction, and perhaps one of the most prominent, the Corfiot population has likewise reclaimed this replica of downtown Paris. Nonetheless, rather than "discontinued it," he could more accurately say the French were expelled. As a diplomat and officer in the British Foreign office, Durrell was intimately involved in political strife in Greece, especially in Athens and Cyprus, so his choice of words here should again be taken as *very* specific. Moreover, he is visiting Corfu not as a British subject of Indian nationality, as he was during the time depicted in *Prospero's Cell*, but rather as a French resident and soon to be French citizen. Durrell physically embodies the colonizers of the island, whose architectural history points to his various 'homes'—a history he *ironically* censors, removing it from explicit reference while concomitantly emphasizing it through contradiction, errors in fact to obvious to be accidental, and bilingual wordplay.

For instance, in the Rue de Rivoli, we have physical proof of the French presence, but in its incompleteness, we also see the curtailed duration of their stay. This situation likewise renders the physical reality of Corfu as the censored content of the text: it cannot speak, Durrell will not speak for it, yet its muteness becomes increasingly discomforting. The partial Rue de Rivoli on Corfu also reinforces the sense of time piqued by the nostalgia in the story, since it is in both time and space that the landscape-palimpsest exists. Durrell even draws attention to the etymology of nostalgia in his poem in "The Anecdotes," "II - In Cairo," beginning with the epigram: "*Nostos* home: *algos* pain: nostalgia..." (*Collected* 203). "The homing pain" is layered with architecture, experiences, and memory (*Collected* 203), all of which represents a wounded home and the homeward journey, which informs the recurring references to memory and its problems. In this very brief overview of the architecture of Corfu Town, Durrell has already established the multinational and political context of the island that will inform the pilgrimage portion of the narrative that takes him outside the city-centre, as well as the conceptual apparatus of the story's form and ironic narrative voice that leans heavily on rhetorical flourishes that perform the genre.

The term 'home,' which is problematic for Durrell as a "native," is just as problematic for these architectural sites, even after they are reclaimed. He contends: "all these motifs blend perfectly and become in some subtle fashion neither Venetian, British, French nor even Greek. They become Corfiote" ("Oil" 289). In the same respect, for the traveling resident, can one consider issues of hybridity and reclaiming in the terms "home" and "native"? If so, is there a meaningful way to distinguish between the cumulative creation of the Corfiot landscape and the foreign resident who becomes the returning native? What claim do these foreign constructions make on the land they occupy, and how can the native and landed population identify with this reconstructed landscape?

Durrell continues, "The British elaborated the stylish Government House with stone especially imported from Malta—but did not stay long enough to enjoy its amenities fully" ("Oil" 289). As the most recent colonial power on the island, apart from tourists, Britain has left a sizeable impact, despite its relatively short stay. Again, I would like to draw attention to Durrell's wordy rephrasing of the ejection of the British as "[they] did not stay long enough to enjoy its amenities fully" ("Oil" 289), with all the colonial exotic(erotic)ism caught in the word "enjoy." After the Ionian islands unified with Greece, the British gave the building to the Greek state, while at the same time the Old Fortress' walls were dismantled, despite protests based on its historic value.

After surveying these politically charged landmarks of the city, the pilgrimage of the narrative takes over and Durrell describes *personally* charged landmarks, although these locations integrate and extend the same questions of hybridity, 'home,' and colonialism, even if they do not rely on the same landmarks. Moreover, the palimpsest of the landscape is successively overwritten by different colonial architectures. This nostalgic return to Kalami and the Shrine of Saint Arsenius (the saint of the title) takes place over the text of *Prospero's Cell*, and hence continues the palimpsest in a more literal sense. On returning to the White House, where he had lived with his first wife Nancy, Durrell is told by his old landlord Athenaios, "The foreigners that come. So many, you will see. Every Sunday many caiques come from town to see the house. Many British; very nice people. Each one has a radio which is very loud. It is marvelous" ("Oil" 297). Durrell notably derides such tourists throughout the story as a whole, despite the publication in which the work appears, as if in doing so his own tour (and the one his reader is on) is somehow ostensibly above such brash "trade in itinerant celebrity hunters" ("Oil" 297). Athenaios' wife makes the pilgrimage of these tourists more explicit and more like the modern pilgrimage: "'Later we will start a hotel,' said Kerkira. 'And then they can stay here all the time with their radios. Already we have many who rent your room-remember where you used to work?'" ("Oil" 297).

Kerkira's monetary speech here, where the tourists are welcome, transforms rural Kalami into a rented resort with radios, and it is quite obviously meant to sound vile to the reader. Immediately after this speech, Durrell's "heart sank slightly" ("Oil" 297), playing off the stereotype of the tourist who wants to visit a place before it is 'ruined' by tourists (though 'ruins' are often the focus). There is a second point that is significant here. It is through Kerkira, who is the primary proponent of increasing tourism, that Durrell creates a voice that contradicts his narrator and that speaks for the island. The story ostensibly tells of Durrell's unaccompanied return to Corfu, but in 'reality' the work sits over three such trips in the summers of 1964 through 1966 (MacNiven 539-548), during all of which, he lived on the Western side of the island near Paleocastrizza, with his wife Claude, as well as (for the 1964 trip) his daughter Sappho and Claude's two children. Such an image is far from that of the romantic traveler reveling nostaligically in his lonely memories, and whom the reader encounters in the text. Since Durrell was overseeing publication of his letters to Miller at this time, he was certainly aware he would contradict his claims to veracity in the story, in print no less. Not every reader would know this, but since Durrell repeatedly alludes to his other texts, he is assuming an audience familiar with his works and likely to consume the contradictory works.

More significantly, Kerkira is also the Greek name for Corfu, which is *absent* from the rest of the text. Durrell is quite honest in the story when he mentions his fluent Greek, as is evidenced by his letters and poetry sent to George Seferis held in the Gennadius Library, Athens, which any modern traveler can read, as well as Kimon Friar's remark to Durrell: "Katsimbalis has given me a copy [of your *Six Poems of Sekilianos and Seferis*] (and has also told me that your Greek is excellent!)" (Friar n.pag). While the fact has slipped from current scholarship, Durrell actually completed and published several translations from Greek authors and poets, including some of the earliest translations of Seferis and Cavafy. Inevitably, two rhetorical questions present themselves. First, why do the foreign words for Kerkira—Corfu and Corcyra—appear in the story, while the Greek word does not? This is particularly prominent given the fact that Durrell has specifically told the reader that his conversations are in Greek—his "fluent Greek puzzled" the taxi driver ("Oil" 289)—and he apparently delights in using selected Greek words familiar to the tourist, such as "ouzo," "retsina," and "caique." At the conclusion of the story, the reader is even told: "'It is a great thing' said Niko sagely, 'to be a creator.' He used the ancient word 'demiurge' which is still current in modern Greek" ("Oil" 302), and this word is repeated a number of times over the next page.

Second, if these conversations are in Greek, why, when Durrell meets his "peasant friends," does the dialogue echo pidgin English? It would appear that for the sake of the narrative in *Holiday* magazine, Durrell often uses rustic, broken sentences. This is an ironic tongue-in-cheek rebuke against the reader who would so easily accept contradictions, and this performs in exacting detail the role of the colonial travel narrative that Durrell customarily avoids in what he called his "foreign residence books." In this playfulness with Greek and English cognates, Kerkira is quite literally the voice of the island, a voice that draws attention back to the reader's concretization of ambiguities.

Similarly, the literary palimpsest lies over the earlier volume, *Prospero's Cell*. This literary intertextuality encourages the reader (or the Durrell fan) to 'read on' to more works, which slowly start to underscore the contradictions, such as those between the travel narrative and Durrell's own voyage. This gives the reader a space in the text to insert materials that allow for the discovery of the expected in the exploration of the unfamiliar. This is the point at which my earlier mention of Spivak develops—Durrell only ironically writes in the voice of the island, contradicting and undermining his position as the author.

As Spivak states, speaking is "a transaction between speaker and listener" (Landry and MacLean "Subaltern Talk" *The Spivak Reader* 275), and hence her subaltern cannot speak (Spivak 308). In this sense, Durrell's story does not seek to speak on behalf of the Greek but rather to make the muteness manifest, just as the silence of the gap, of the unknown, becomes increasingly palpable. Durrell makes the reader's assumptions explicit and obvious, yet they remain unnoticed, which proves Spivak's points about speaking. However, while the Greeks do not 'speak' in this text (only an ironic presentation of colonial expectations is offered) insofar as there is no dialogue in which they are heard, Durrell makes the deafness of the reader's expectations problematic. Through the cynosure of the gap, he returns attention to the voicelessness imposed by colonialist discourse, and in this way silences the expectations that speak too loudly for the Other to be heard in dialogue. The deafening silence is slowly made obvious as contradictions and aporias accrue. Yet, this process, in its ironic context, resists speaking on behalf of Kerkira, Corfu. To allow the possibility of dialogue, Durrell avoids naively ventriloquising the Corfiot voice, and instead the problematic silence of Corfu in the story is foregrounded and juxtaposed against the audience's assumptions.

In his published letters to Henry Miller, Durrell refers to the same journey, using phrases and adjectives that resurface nearly verbatim in "Oil for the Saint," but more contradictions appear quite strongly. With regard to the paratexts, the first volume of the Durrell-Miller correspondence (George Wickes' *A Private Correspondence*) appeared in 1963, so the role of these letters as printable texts was close to Durrell's mind when he wrote in 1964: "we went up to Kouloura [Kalami] and spent a night in the old white house" (*Durrell-Miller* 403). The "we" contradicts the unaccompanied pilgrimage Durrell creates in "Oil for the Saint," especially the opening scenes of arrival and the finale where he falls asleep alone in his old room. The contradiction is reinforced by his note that "Totsa [Anastasius Athenaios] is wrestling with a succession of strokes" (403), which in the published version become "Athenaios had a small stroke two years before which had half-paralysed one shoulder" ("Oil" 295). It would seem suffering does not befit the strong peasant in the pages of *Holiday* magazine. Nonetheless, Durrell does tell the story of the "jog... down to the shrine of Saint Arsenius... one brilliant morning" (*Durrell-Miller* 403), which validates the story. Immediately after filling the lamps, Durrell states: "There was one more visit to be made—to the little underwater cave in which we used to hide.... Once we had made a clay statue of Pan and set it up in the cave" ("Oil" 302). Unfortunately, "the *winter sea* had long since *licked* out the cave" ("Oil" 302; emphasis added), but even this is altered by Durrell's earlier letter that tells Miller, "The cave is still there but our statue has been *licked* away by the *winter sea*" (*Durrell-Miller* 403; emphasis added). In the former case, the cave is not where Durrell actually describes it, though in the latter its location goes without mention. Bitterness, such as the bitterness of the wars in Greece and the suffering of the people, are kept at the limits of the story and are minimized, like Athenaios' (Totsa's) stroke. Durrell was also well aware of the need to censor his political commentary, as in *Reflections on a Marine Venus*[35] and *Bitter Lemons*.

As the pilgrimage (and my retracing of the text) winds to a close, the reader is slowly led to the shrine of Saint Arsenius, near Kalami, and Durrell completes the archetypal journey with the reconciliation required by the poignant conclusion of *Prospero's Cell*. The reader, there, is told "the white house has been bombed,"[36] which is another fabulation, and "History with her painful and unexpected changes cannot be made to pity or remember; that is *our* function" (*Prospero's* 133; emphasis original). In this way, "Oil for the Saint" is the reconciliation between cultural bodies that picks up after the intercultural violence of the island's history of warfare and suffering. Durrell "think[s] only that the shrine with the three black cypresses and the tiny rock-pool where we bathed must still be left" (133) and it is here that he must return with his "parting tribute to hollow flesh" (*Pied* 34). While Durrell is never explicit about cultural hybridity in the course of the story, it is significant to note at this climactic point, and given his interest in archetypal theory and his earlier correspondence with Carl Jung[37], the journey as a form of appeasement seems inevitable. The conclusion of the pilgrimage is the mixing of Greek and French olive oil in the lamps of the Shrine of Saint Arsenius ("Oil" 300). Niko explains: "'If it lights the first time... it means you are welcome and that [Arsenius] has no outstanding complaints against you.'.... The wick flamed up and Athenaios clapped his hands softly" ("Oil" 301). Saint Arsenius' presumed pleasure in the tribute reconciles the hidden colonial history of the island.

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[35] See David Roessel's "Introduction" (3-13) and "'Cut in Half as It Was': Editorial Excisions and the Original Shape of *Reflections on a Marine Venus*" (64-77).

[36] This is also another instance of the palimpsest of text, since these scenes from the conclusions of *Prospero's Cell*, as well as the opening of the book, are contained in an altered form in "A Landmark Gone" (187-190), which has itself gone through a number of republications: "the house is in ruins… I think only the shrine with the three cypresses and the tiny rock pool where we bathed is still left" (190).

[37] Durrell's letters to Jung have not yet been found, but Jung's letters to Durrell, which begin the correspondence, are held in Carbondale in the Lawrence Durrell papers. Jung wrote to Durrell via the BBC on 15 December 1947 in response to his short article "Can Dreams Live on When Dreamers Die?," 1947 article in the *Listener* that discusses Durrell's dreams while sleeping overnight at Epidaurus. Jung notes, "Having had some experience of a similar kind I should very much like to know in what you further observations consist" (n.pag). Only two letters are extant from Jung, the second sent directly to Durrell in Argentina, in which he responds to Durrell's comments on Georg Groddeck.

This same hybridity applies to Durrell's thorny assertion of himself as a returning "native" with a sense of nostalgia for a place that most properly cannot be his "home." The story opens with Durrell's assertion: "The return of the native; a good thing or a bad" ("Oil" 286). What remains a gap, however, is the allusion to Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* where Eustacia Vye is the daughter of a Corfiot bandmaster, yet she is trapped in an English landscape. With the allusion, the reader knows Durrell is not giving a naively realistic representation, yet another reader would instead find a typical colonial 'going native,' further aligning the text with Saidian postcolonial theory's reliance on sincerity over irony in colonial representations. Nonetheless, reading the ironic voice of the colonial is troubled here by the role of the author in giving voice to the 'colonized,' even if the island is allowed to speak back under the name of Kerkyra, who contradicts the narrator. It is Durrell's oil from his French groves that gives light to the scene, just as it is his pen that illuminates the blank page.

With this temporal, textual, and architectural palimpsest firmly in place and contextualized in its colonialism, I will return to my first quotation from the text, which betrays the role of memory and nostalgia in the uncanny nature of both the narrator's re-experiencing of the island and the colonial history/attitudes embedded in the 'palimpsests.' Aside from the obvious connections to the nostalgic tone of the work, there is also a suggestion of the flux of the individual in opposition to the perceived sameness of the place. Corfu, as a place of hybridity and multiple influences, is obviously not static. The contradictory constant state of flux on the island is implicit in Durrell's references to the landmarks, since even "the profile of the rock [at the Shrine of Saint Arsenius] has been altered somewhat by the explosion of an Italian landmine during the war" ("Oil" 300"). Nevertheless, "It hadn't changed" (300) and the narrator insists on the opposite interpretation from that implied by his depictions of the landscapes. For the returning 'native,' "the real strangeness was that it was all so recognizable, down to the smallest detail" ("Oil" 287), which replicates the "familiar[ity]" (45).

Durrell's creation of most of the incidents in the ostensibly non-fiction narrative for the sake of his various audiences is his depiction of a traveler who confronts the repressed contents of his projection onto the Other or foreign locale. This theme is explicit in his later works, such as *Monsieur*, where the French and Egyptian landscapes blur into each other and are ultimately revealed as the fictional creation of the narrator and the colonial's mental constructs. By the same token, the recovered picture that creates an uncanny recognition ("Oil" 295) is a theme that appears twice in Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* and once in *The Avignon Quintet*, so again the seemingly objective travel narrative is in fact a palimpsest written over successive historical and fictional works.

I have already noted Durrell's brief correspondence with Jung, who was keen "to learn about [Durrell's] hellenic dreams" (Jung n.pag). This and the general focus of Durrell's oeuvre suggest that travel is an inward journey. This is very much Jung's point in his letters to Durrell, where his interest focuses on Durrell's dream experiences during travel with the implication that these express the "extraordinary relations between our unconscious mind and what one calls time and space" (n.pag). This implicitly reflects Durrell's opening notion in his remembrance of Corfu *Prospero's Cell*, written in Alexandria, where travel offers "the discovery of yourself" (11). Such an inner exploration reflected in the outer voyage is exactly the allegorical structure Durrell employs in *Cefalû* (a verbal mixing of Corfu and Kerkira or Kephalonia, and also know as *The Dark Labyrinth*), and as a reflection the mirror is significant. Not only do photographs recur in the fiction, but the mirror itself also plays a pivotal role in the *Alexandria Quartet*[38], and in "Oil for the Saint" the "flawless skin of the night sea [can] settle... into its *mirrored* calm" (303; emphasis added).

The reflection of the story in the correspondence likewise makes the implausible claim that "the water was like a mirror in the little cove" (*Durrell-Miller* 403), even though it is the Ionian Sea, which is never that calm. In the tale, Durrell first views Corfu through "heavy field glasses" ("Oil" 287) that mitigate and enhance his perception; moreover, such a reference to perception draws the reader back to the text layered below, where Corfu is "a dark crystal; the form of things becomes irregular, refracted. Mirages suddenly swallow islands, and wherever you look the trembling curtain of the atmosphere deceives" (*Prospero's* 11).

For the travel narrative reader, as well as his narrator who had "Better leave the rest unsaid / .... [to] Keep its calms like tears unshed" (*Bitter* 252), Durrell has made literal his statement: "Other countries may offer you discoveries in manners or lore or landscape; Greece offers you something harder—the discovery of yourself" (*Prospero's* 11). This, of course, implies that the image of Greece, which is not quite the same statement as 'Greece itself,' is represented as if through an interpretation-altering "dark crystal" that leaves this image "irregular, refracted" (11) in a way that points the reader back towards a reflection of him or herself that must in some way be censored, or at least perpetually obscured in this refracted reflection. This is to say, the image Durrell's "you" (11) has in approaching Corfu negotiates between the places and the observer, an observer who can only perceive the deceptive distortions of that which cannot be perceived directly. Moreover, this troubled image offers "the discovery of yourself" (11) to this same indeterminate "you," which suggests that the distorted refractions are also partly reflections in which the viewer may find his or her own likeness, or at least a familiarity.

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[38] See Morrison's "Mirrors and the Heraldic Universe" (499-515), Gossmans's "Some Characters in Search of a Mirror" (79-84), Edel's "A Multiplicity of Mirrors" (185-191), Mellard's "Unity of Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*" (77-143), and Bolton's recent "Spellbound by the Image" (1-9).

In reading this passage, I read contrary to previous scholarship, perhaps best exemplified by Marilyn Papayanis' argument that

> If Durrell's poetics, as elucidated by Pine, bring to mind Robinson Crusoe on his remote island, they ring true to Defoe in other ways as well, for the Durrellian oeuvre is peopled by an entire cast of Fridays, a fact which tends to call into question his integrity as a so-called travel writer.... For Durrell would later assert to a friend attempting to write a travel book: "Invent some people, peasants and so on – and treat them quite boldly. Put them in and forget them just as you feel inclined" (McNiven [sic] 293). It is not surprising therefore that early on in *Prospero's Cell*, the first of Durrell's Greek travel narratives, he asserts that "Other countries offer you discoveries in manners or lore or landscape; Greece offers you something harder—the discovery of yourself" (11) (a paradoxical statement in that he has subtitled his work 'A guide to the landscape and manners of Corcyra.") (*From* 185; quoting MacNiven, *A Biography* 293)

This creation of an imaginary place in travel narrative is not without its irony (often quite overt irony, through rarely perceived by critics), and the refracting crystal that Papayanis refers to implies, even in her own language, the kind of hesitation that should dissuade the attentive reader from expecting a sincere myth of authenticity in a genre generally known for such myth-making. The boldly invented (yet easily forgotten) peasants that Papayanis refers to disturb the reader in "Oil for the Saint" and make palpable the paradoxicality she notes. Such peasants are rendered for an audience's expectations, such that it voyeuristically discovers the known in the unknown, but they are also ironical disruptions. Where Papayanis discusses the ethics (the 'poethics') of Durrell's expatriate writings, the function and effects of the paradox cannot be discounted from her contention that "it [his description of foreign cultures] also, paradoxically, tends to train attention on the self rather than the Other in a dialogic manner" (186).

Nonetheless, to return to Durrell's Corfu text, as a pilgrimage to a sacred birthplace, he returns to his "place of predeliction" (*Blue* 22). For Durrell, this is because "[one] ha[s] two birth-places. You have the place where you were really born and then you have a place of predeliction where you really wake up to reality.... in your inner life" (*Blue* 22). The simplicity of the pilgrimage belies the complexity of the intercultural context of both the location and narrative. Likewise, the nostalgic tone of the work draws on concepts of 'home' that are based in the imaginative landscape of memory, which makes Durrell's discussion significant. By using the reader's expectations (nostalgia, exoticism, and Imperialism), the text disturbs self-*reflection*. The landscape recreates the text into something more than it was at first and forces an inward examination of the mirroring of expectations onto the foreign terrain, which in turn is a projection. Durrell draws on his readership's expectations of a factually true travel narrative by an author who has become associated with the Hellenic world and the exotic Middle East. By using these various expectations, he ultimately places the reader in the position of the narrator staring at his own uncanny photograph; the dark crystal forces the hard discovery of one's unidentifiable mirrored projections, a confrontation with the limitations of statements that end in aporia.

In line with this sense of the unknown, Miller's precedent of unexplored and undescribed space recurs in Durrell's *Prospero's Cell: A Guide To The Landscape And Manner's Of the Island of Corfu*, which was published four years after Miller's *The Colossus of Maroussi* (which itself contained materials written by Durrell). Corfu occupies the entirety of his scenic focus, and instead of the well in Mycenae, Durrell finds a mysterious cave in Paleocastrissa, which offers useful parallels:

> For the more recondite or the more specialist, one must record the existence of a great cave in the point immediately before the beach marked Hermones on the map. It is approachable only when there is a calm, and the entrance is imposing, being formed in the style of a great gateway. Empty plaques of metamorphic stone stand above, as if the inscriptions have been melted from them. (Durrell, *Prospero's Cell* 60-61)

What first catches attention are the repeated references to texts, such that the site is identified by its location on the map. The cave is not described as existing in Paleocastrizza or even on Corfu itself, but rather as "the point immediately before the beach marked Hermones on the map" (*Prospero's Cell* 60). This is to say, the cave is not next to the beach itself on Corfu, below the towering shadow of Angelokastro and tangible to tourists on packaged 'sun and shag' holidays to the modern Pink Palace, but rather, it exists on the map as a readable text meant only "For the more recondite or the more specialist" (*Prospero's Cell* 60).

Furthermore, the cave is not even on the map where Hermones appears, but instead Durrell words his description more intangibly; he feels that "one must record [its] existence... in the point immediately before the beach" (*Prospero's Cell* 60), which implies that he must record it authorially because it is not inscribed on the sheet that he is referring to. This places the cave at a double remove from any 'real' locale, as a text inserted within a text. The reader is intensely reminded of the textuality of these descriptions, calling attention back to the narrative as a physical volume held in hand and made up of inscribed language.

Following on these suggestions, Durrell ties its visual characteristics to inscription as well: "Empty plaques of metamorphic stone stand above, as if the inscriptions have been melted from them" (*Prospero's Cell* 61). The cave is a surfaced medium meant to carry inscriptions such as an author inscribes with his potent pen upon the page; it is more like the paper on which the map is drawn, rather than the sites that are 'reterritorialized' by the cartographer. Likewise, this sets the cave up for the reader as ready for the kind of inscription Durrell hints at with regard to Corfu Town—this is to say, any fixed characteristics that it has are mutable, and previous histories have been effaced from it, like vellum scraped clean for a new layer of writing. This also suggests that the reader is able, as with Miller's well or pit in Mycenae, to partake in the projection Durrell describes. Durrell's Corfiot cave is not readable until new meanings and texts colonize the space by inscribing themselves on the clean surfaces of the blank plaques. As with Miller, the ambiguity of absence, an unknown, is an ideal site for the inscription of contents at the reader's discretion.

Moreover, there are similarities in the language used with Miller's well; Durrell specifically notes that "The entrance is knee-deep in water and *slimy* with rock" (*Prospero's Cell* 61; emphasis mine), which makes little sense. For a cave to be knee deep in water on Corfu is to be expected, as many caves are, but the description "*slimy* with rock" (*Prospero's Cell* 61; emphasis mine) is peculiar, since one would instead expect the rock to be slimy with something that issues 'sliminess,' such as algae, rather than rock itself. This matches Miller's description of his site as a "*slimy* well of horrors" (*Colossus* 91; emphasis mine), which he follows with a description of "the pit [being filled with] a spawn of snakes, lizards, and *bats*" (*Colossus* 214; emphasis mine). Again, this is paralleled in Durrell's text, where "The walls are palpitant with the bodies of bats" (*Prospero's Cell* 61).

Unlike Miller, Durrell's narrator (again confusingly named for the author, but from whom the narrator should be distinguished) does not turn away from the void—he enters the caverns and explores the ambiguous absence signified by the plaque-like walls that have been scraped-clean of their inscriptions, into 'blanks.' The ambiguous element of this scene is emphasized through references to texts, such that there is

> a rubbish-heap of broken stones at the beginning of a corridor. But a clearly defined corridor leading, it seems, into the very heart of the earth. Within twenty paces it branches into a multiplicity of corridors—like a dream, or *a poem too charged with allusions*—and the walls become heavy and *damp, as if with mist.* (Durrell, *Prospero's* 61; emphasis mine)

This allusion to allusions makes the cavern a textual fabulation with multiple paths to each of its ambiguous meanings, much like the missing "glossary" in "Zero and Asylum in the

Snow." The reader is made to resolve ambiguities of the either/or variety, to fill gaps in the text, and to resolve plurisignation of the descriptions.

French points to a similar idea in Joyce's *Dubliners* when she notes "The masking language and ellipses prevent readers from seeing, from knowing what they want to know, from apprehending the reality they feel lies behind the text. One cannot reach that reality in this book: what it shows us is blindness, and it does this by forcing us to undergo it" (445). However, her blindness, which arises from "Gaps[, which] are ellipses in logic, language, or information" (444), has a clear purpose: "The city's blindness to reality is caused by its religious and proprietorial oughts; the cure suggested in 'The Dead' is removing those blinders" (445). Durrell may ironically point to the reader's blindness to colonial history in, but the gaps themselves are true absences.

The concern with Durrell and Miller is less with silencing a colonial subject or Other than it is the reader's interpretation. In *The Alexandria Quartet*, Durrell's protagonist says of his correspondent "It will be up to Clea to interpret my silence according to her own needs and desires... Does not everything* depend on our interpretation of the silence around us? So that...." (195; second ellipsis original). As Pearson points out, "the problematics of absence in [Joyce's] *Dubliners* is often tied to the two most deeply silenced, symbolically devoiced, and overwritten subjects of Irish colonial history—its women and its dead" (147). This is not the case with Durrell. Durrell's silence does not reveal a truth—it is only in accord with the reader's "needs and desires." Durrell's narrator not only makes this claim with regard to the written correspondence the novel reader is in the act of reading, but he ends the statement with an ellipsis and an asterisk for an endnote that refers to a blank page. The latter is a device later explained in the next novel by Pursewarden, a character who is a novelist:

> She was thinking of the famous page with the astersik in the first volume which refers one to a page in the text which is mysteriously blank. Many people take this for a printer's error. But Pursewarden himself assured me that it was deliberate. "I refer to the reader to a blank page in order to throw him back upon his own resources—which is where every reader ultimately belongs." (*Alexandria* 307)

Unlike Pearson's sense of the gap in *Dubliners*, Durrell's blank does not reflect the silencing of a subject so much as it is a call for the reader's self-awareness of the process of gap-filling.

All of this returns us to the opening contention of this chapter. In concretizing the text while reading, in Iser's sense of the process, or the more generalized 'filling of gaps' as I have described it, we find Durrell and Miller's 'unknown' and the text's return to these gaps. Just as in the imperialist gesture of naming, such as renaming Κερκγρα Corfu (which allows Durrell to create a character who speaks with the island's title), the gaps in the text create a need for invention. As Durrell notes, "When you are afraid of something, or you want to hate it, you give it a name…. It is covered in a name, and you do not see it properly, you only see the little black letters" ("Zero and Asylum" 261), but in this instance what was initially a telling comment for the nature of his surrealist prose is equally informative for the colonial naming ironically read in both Durrell's and Miller's other Greek texts. .

In this way, the gaps and ambiguities are cynosures attracting attention—while they may be individually tied to Surrealism, landscapes, or colonial histories, they all share the commonality of drawing on the 'unknown' in order to elucidate the reading process and to turn attention from the author to the reader. Durrell's misrepresentation of Corfu loses its primacy as the reader becomes aware of the iceberg that has been excised, the gap in the text where Corfiot history would appear. Instead, attention moves to the reader's filling of this gap and resolution of prominent contradictions, and this displaces Durrell's latent 'Orientalism' (latent Philhellenism) as a topic of interest. Beginning with only a contradiction and missing space in Miller's description of ancient Mycenae, the general notion of the 'unknown' and its ties to the active reader has led to a variety of odd bedfellows: postcolonial approaches to Philhellenic texts; a comparison between Durrell and Miller to their contemporaries based on their privileging the reader's activities; and an outline of the function of the 'unknown' and its characteristics. While the 'unknown' itself remains elusive or absent from the text, residing in the reader, the absences and ambiguities that point to the technique Durrell and Miller constructed from the idea of it remain fecund. This overview provides a palette of materials to draw on in the next section when we begin to trace the implications of this approach to Durrell's and Miller's works, and in particular how it draws attention to their position with their contemporaries and the prominent themes these contemporaries have seen in the works: identity and sex.

RELOCATING DURRELL AND MILLER IN THEIR MILIEU

i. Modernism *per se*

The ubiquity of Philhellenism in modernist literature and manifestoes is familiar to most readers and scholars, or if not the love of all things Greek, at least the urge to allude to a literary tradition that takes Greece as its origin is prevalent and continually resurfacing. Whether a reader takes up Perl's *The Tradition of Return*, Nicholls' *Modernisms*, Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* or primary texts in line with Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Pound's *Cantos*, the presence in absence of the Ancient Greek world is readily seen in the Modernists who are its literary heirs (or its posthumously adopted sons). Yet, the influence of modern Greek authors and modern Greece itself is far less studied in mainstream approaches to Anglo-American Modernisms. Durrell and Miller, who are between Eliot's tradition and classicism (perhaps the hegemonic Modernism) and the Greek authors who responded to this particular form of Modernism, tied Parisian Surrealism to culturally and nationally Greek contexts. Durrell and Miller bridge this national gap between movements of the 1920s and 1930s, both creatively in their own writings and literally in their residences in the countries in question and long-term interactions with the other prominent figures in these movements.

Nonetheless, it is more typical for critics to approach Miller through the context of his Parisian affiliations, for his intellectual milieu, and only recently has scholarship moved to examine the importance of his Greek ties.[39] In contrast, critics have discussed Durrell through his British, Greek, and Middle-Eastern ties,[40] likely due to his status as a colonial. Nonetheless, their close connection with the Greek modernists and Surrealism as it developed in Greece and France led Durrell and Miller to contribute to the Anglo-American tradition in a mode that reflects the influence of what George Seferis later called "the Greek style," a notion he coined in a paper comparing T. S. Eliot with Constantine Cavafy, the Alexandrian Greek poet (1863-1933).

This 'Greek style' is typified, for Seferis, by the allusive and referential nature of the text such that literary traditions are not only cumulative and influential but also concurrent: the "pedestals without the statues" (Seferis 146) that Petros Vlastos uses as a metaphor for Cavafy's poems point, for Seferis, to the absences that history and shared locations cover in these texts, with modern Greece existing literally within the past. It is not only the allusions but also the aporias in the texts that tie them to a living tradition in which the modern develops coextensively with the ancient (Seferis 161), as opposed to one in a dead tongue that must be "obtain[ed] by great labour" (Eliot, "Tradition" 14). Seferis is more explicit in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize in literature, which he titled "Some Notes on Modern Greek Tradition," saying "His art is characterized by… his sense of history. By history I do not mean the account of the past, but the history that lives in the present and sheds light on our present life, on its drama and its destiny" ("Giorgos Seferis – Nobel" n.pag).

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[39] See Keeley's *Inventing Paradise* and Roessel's *In Byron's Shadow*.

[40] See Diboll's *Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet in its Egyptian Contexts*, Morrison's *A Smile in His Mind's Eye* for his early British orientations with Eastern influences, and Lillios' edited collection *Lawrence Durrell and the Greek World*.

With this range of Modernisms, this chapter tacitly accepts Susan Stanford Friedman's recent contention that "As terms in an evolving scholarly discourse, *modern, modernity,* and *modernism* constitute a critical Tower of Babel, a cacophony of categories that become increasingly useless the more inconsistently they are used" (497) and also that "modernism [is] in an exchange where the word means not just different things, but precisely opposite things" (494) to critics ranging from Ihab Hassan to Malcolm Bradbury (to use two of her competing citations). Vassiliki Kolocotroni, who has also written on the relationship between Modernism and Hellenism, argues in her recent anthology *Modernism* that "Modernism is not a movement. It is a term that masks conflict and upheaval and any number of contradictory positions" (vii). Given the Modernisms that surround Durrell and Miller, and with which they engage, this plurality of competing artistic visions is a more appropriate framework for discussing the reconciliations, emulations, and resistances found in their works (such as their integration of Surrealist and Greek Modernist influences but resistance against Eliot's influence).

My focus here is largely on Greek Modernism, which integrated the salient features of Parisian Surrealism, with the most influential Greek modernists temporarily residing in Paris and taking up Surrealist manifestos. With this first commonality via Paris, work on Surrealism and Miller has grown lately, with monographs dedicated to the topic,[41] and promising work is being completed on Durrell.[42] Miller's interaction with Breton and Brassai is well-documented (Ferguson, *Henry Miller: A Life* 175; MacNiven, *Durrell-Miller Letters*

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[41] See Jahshan's *Henry Miller and the Surrealist Discourse of Excess* and Balliet's *Henry Miller and Surrealist Metaphor*.

[42] Apart from the many articles that discuss Surrealism as a secondary topic, Morrison's recently released *A Smile in His Mind's Eye: A Study of the Early Works of Lawrence Durrell* takes up Surrealism as a significant topic.

214; and Jahshan 5-7), as is Durrell's ties to them via Miller (MacNiven *Lawrence Durrell: A Biography* 171; and Bowker *Through the Dark* 75, 83, and 98). Both authors also strongly interacted with and influenced the young Dylan Thomas, publishing his surrealist prose in the literary magazine they edited, *The Booster / Delta*, although their support for Thomas' surrealist work and other young authors is still often overlooked.[43] Nevertheless, their continued interest in creating "elitist" (Orwell, "Back" 30) literature that does not focus overtly on social issues drew the public recriminations of some, such as George Orwell ("Back to the Thirties" 30-31; "Booster" 100)[44] who otherwise praised Miller ("Inside" 101-133).

In this sense, Durrell and Miller illustrate the transfer of the Modernisms of London and Paris to their reinvigoration in Athens in the 1930s.[45] However, these two authors then returned this 'translation' (literally a carrying across[46]) of Modernism to Western Europe and the Americas, but subtly altered—Parisian surrealism and its obscured allusiveness is transformed by the apparition of the past in the present for Greek Modernists (Seferis' 'Greek style') and is then made to attend to their own revisions and resistances to Anglo-American Modernisms. There are a number of examples of their 'in-between' position in relation to movements tied to Paris, Athens, London, and New York, but drawing only from the period of their most intensive Parisian and Greek contacts, Miller and Durrell mark out a surprising breadth. The two, with Anais Nin and Alfred Perlès, founded the journals *The Booster* and *Delta* in Paris to publish English and French materials, but often with a Philhellenic turn, and their own works appeared in little journals as diverse as *Seven* (frequently along with Dylan Thomas); Eliot's *The Criterion* (only Miller in 1937 and 1939, the second of which was "Un Etre Etoilique," focusing on Anais Nin's internationalism); Tambimuttu's *Poetry London*, Derek Patmore's *Greek Horizons*; James Laughlin's *New Directions In Poetry and Prose*, Charles Henri Ford's *View*, and Robert Duncan's *Experimental Review* (which promoted Durrell and Miller vigorously). Of note among these periodicals, Duncan's short-lived *Experimental Review* repeatedly advertised both Durrell and Miller, drawing on Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn* and Durrell's surrealist Greek poems.[47] Duncan also repeatedly attempted to publish Durrell's surrealist short story pair set (and written) on Corfu, "Zero and Asylum in the Snow." This shows Durrell and Miller blurring the boundaries between the various movements they interacted with and the national focus of their publishing efforts, as well as the breadth of their interactions with their milieu.

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[43] See my "*Delta* and Dylan Thomas' 'Prologue to an Adventure'" for an example of how Durrell's and Miller's editorial and correspondence efforts have been overlooked, in this case rendering an incomplete version of Thomas' short story in his collected works rather than his final and corrected copy for Miller's and Durrell's *Delta* published in Paris.

[44] See also Durrell's published, anonymous response to Orwell, "The Booster" (78-79).

[45] For example, see Beaton (*George Seferis* 31-64); Valaoritis' memoir on the developing awareness of Anglo-American poetry among Greek poets in the 1930s and 1940s (51); Raizis' "Lawrence Durrell and the Greek Poets: A Contribution to Cultural History," which traces Durrell's various interactions with Greek poets of the 1930s and earlier (246-252); Keeley's *Inventing Paradise*, which examines both Durrell and Miller with respect to their re-articulation of Byronic approaches to philhellenism; and Kolokotroni and Taxidou's "Modernism and Hellenism" (21).

[46] For more see Judith Lacoue-Labarthe's "'Not translate, but transplant': ambassades du récit (dans *Les Ambassadeurs* de Henry James, *Le Quatuor d'Alexandrie* de Lawrence Durrell et *Au-dessous du volcan* de Malcolm Lowry," the titular quotation of which draws on Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*.

As an example of the Greek influences Durrell and Miller engaged with, we see how the London-based Modernists often invoke Classical and Hellenic allusions as a call to tradition (much like the Romantics), such that Eliot's "Unreal city" in *The Waste Land*, the notion of the canon, and Primitivism, are all imbued with characteristics imaginatively projected onto an ancient time. Bosnakis, in his Introduction to *Greek Modernism and*

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[47] I mean Durrell's surreal poems that use Greece as a setting. His poems *in* Greek, which are also surrealist, remain unpublished and are held in the Seferis collection the Gennadius Library, Athens.

Beyond has noted this more forcefully than other critics, pointing to how Modernists invoke the ancient while often overlooking the current reality of Greece:

> the increased interest in modernism and the avant-garde represents a Eurocentric and Americanocentric quest for poetics that, under the shadow of the millennium, resorts to the metalanguage of modernism. The interest is fueled mainly by two factors: the discovery by their official cultures of hitherto forgotten or dismissed authors, and the anxious effort to redescribe the potential extent of the literary realm. (Bosnakis 359)

Bosnakis' doubts about the internationalism of Modernism turns attention to Modernism's 'Others,' and he continues:

> What is missing from all these movements [Modernism and the avant garde], however, is a quest for avant-gardist authors who are migrant, decentered, suppressed, ethnic-oriented, or minority-oriented…. This is the point where the Greek modernist, avant-gardist migrant author is expected to make his or her *entrée* into the world picture of *poiesis*. (Bosnakis 359)

While the emphatic nature of Bosnakis' position is apparent, he agrees with other Greek voices in studies of Modernism, most notably Kolocotroni, who co-edited the Edinburgh text *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*, which has received supportive reviews and is in wide use.

Though milder, Kolocotroni also notes the same "Eurocentic and Americanocentric" tendencies in Modernism in a review: "The map of modernism drawn up here [in the Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume VII, *Modernism and the New Criticism*] is an overwhelmingly Anglo-American one. Despite references to the role of European movements and theorists in the editors' introduction, the rest of the collection does not follow these signposts, so important to any understanding of modernism" ("Cambridge History" 118). This Western notion of all things Greek (Philhellenism), as per the previous discussion of colonial projection on Corfu, is akin to the Surrealist pursuit of the unconscious, as in automatic writing, in that it is an exploration of contents of the Same through an examination of the Other. The ancient is used to the discuss the modern, and its context is therefore modern. Just as the tourist of Corfu finds him or herself in Greece's dark crystal (as discussed in the previous chapter), the Modernist exploring the role of Ancient Greek works in the tradition of the Western Canon finds, naturally enough, himself reflected back. However, when this imaginative Philhellenism first sees Greece, the allusive neo-Romantic imagination must contend with reality. This is what develops in Seferis' comparison of Eliot and Cavafy where Cavafy's sense of tradition and the canon are slowly revealed to be personal experiences inflected by the past with which they overlap.

In studies of Modernism, the *anna mirabilis* of 1922 is often noted: a year synonymous with the height of Modernism. This is the year that saw the publication of Joyce's *Ulysses*, Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and the founding of *The Criterion*, which Durrell identifies as "the most important periodical of the day" (*Key* 177) and others would call the most influential literary periodical of the first half of the century. This evaluation of 1922 is also forwarded by Levenson, among others[48]:

> If we look for a mark of modernism's coming of age, the founding of the *Criterion* in 1922 may prove a better instance than *The Waste Land*, better

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[48] See, for instance, Nicholls' *Modernisms* (254-258) and North's *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern* (3-8).

> even than *Ulysses*, because it exemplifies the institutionalization of the movement, the accession to cultural legitimacy. The journal provided Eliot, as editor, with a capacious forum; it had financial stability and intellectual weight; it constituted a respectable vessel for sometimes suspicious contents. (*Genealogy* 213)

Levenson also notes that the two institutionalizing forces in Modernism are interlaced:

> *The Waste Land* appeared in the first issue of the journal, and its entry into the literary arena was no doubt eased by this context.... To set the *Criterion* next to *Blast* is to underscore the extent of the change in eight years. (*Genealogy* 213)

This Anglo-American focus of later scholarship, which takes "the institutionalization of the movement, the accession to cultural legitimacy" for granted, is one element disputed in Durrell's and Miller's works, especially through their close ties to Greek Modernism, which was in turn more closely affiliated with French movements than English or American.

Also, Durrell and Miller had not met or corresponded with Eliot prior to the publication of their first novels. This is particularly noteworthy since Durrell's *Pied Piper of Lovers* was published through Faber and Faber (1935). As Durrell recounts the 29 December 1938 meeting of all three,

> Henry Miller, who said he always visualized Eliot as a 'lean-faced Calvinist,' was most astonished and intrigued when I returned to Paris with an account of my first two meetings with him. So much so, in fact, that he started reading him.... I think Eliot himself was a little intimidated by the thought of meeting the renegade hero of *Tropic of Cancer* in the flesh, while Miller was still half

> convinced that Eliot would be dressed like a Swiss pastor. ("The Other Eliot" 61)

What Durrell leaves out of this public-face description is Eliot's timidity, such as Durrell's impression of Eliot being "a little intimidated," which is quite clear in Eliot's letter: "I am ready to arrange to meet [Miller] under whatever conditions you judge most propitious, if he is willing, or if he can be reduced to a state of anaesthesia in which he might be willing to meet anybody" (Letter to Lawrence Durrell n.pag). The image of an anaesthetized Miller as some kind of Prufrock, "like a patient etherized upon a table" (Eliot, "Love" 3), is suitably ridiculous and points to the difficulty of finding Eliot's influence in *Tropic of Cancer* despite his influences on Miller's publishing. Nonetheless, Miller would go on to have works published in *The Criterion*, though Eliot's letters to Durrell note that Durrell's "The Poet's Horn" would not be suitable because "I don't like to publish articles in the *Criterion* in which my own work is one of the subjects discussed.... I have certain opinions which you will no doubt discount" (Durrell, "The Other" 62). While both authors went on to have friendly relationships with Eliot, their distinctions are significant, and Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* makes many specific distinctions between Eliot's approach and Durrell's own—later in life, Durrell even revised his list of 'uncles' (senior writers who supported his work) in a public lecture, listing Miller, Katsimbalis, Seferis, and Stephanides, with Theodore Stephanides replacing Eliot's typical place in this family (MacNiven, *Lawrence Durrell* 651; Durrell, "From the Elephant's" 1-9).

1922 saw other major events that are often neglected in Modernist studies of the specifically Anglo-American literary tradition. September 9, 1922 marked the battle for Anatolia between Greece and Turkey, as well as the ensuing massacre of Smyrna. The massacre of Greeks at Smyrna, the defeat of the Greek army, often seen by Greeks as partly due to betrayal by the British and Americans, and the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Greeks from what is now Turkey marked the end of the long-held vision for a Greater Greece reaching from the Ionian to Istanbul, which was of course named Constantinopolis in this vision.[49] This was the end of the 'grand idea' promulgated in the Romantics' Philhellenism, and especially seen in Byron's dedication to the Greek cause. Moreover, Hemingway marks *In Our Time* (1925) by opening with the story "On The Quai at Smyrna" and ending with an "Envoi" that sees the King of Greece, a contentious figure (due to his German ancestry), seated in his garden. Hence, Greece and Smyrna are the frame for the short story collection. This reframing of 1922, the quintessential year of pre-eminence for Anglo-American Modernism, is telling, especially coming from an author who is not typically associated with the notions of tradition and the individual talent or classicism, as articulated by Eliot, but who nonetheless turns the *anna mirabilis* of Modernism back to the traditions it sought to integrate yet often failed to acknowledge in their contemporary forms.

With regard to these contemporary movements that are not typically integrated into Modernism, Surrealism plays a role via Durrell's and Miller's interactions with Andre Bréton and David Gascoyne, among others in Paris. Perhaps more importantly, Greek Modernism was developing when Durrell and Miller were in Greece forming important literary relationships that would last a lifetime. While surreal moments are in Miller's writings about

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[49] The difference in names points to the cultural tensions between the Greek and the Arab world with Istanbul/Constantinople reflecting the same tension as the Greek versus Arab vision of Egypt's Alexandria (named for Alexander the Great, it points to its Greek roots, yet this past runs contrary to the nationalism of its modern populace). In the ongoing struggle against 400 years of Ottoman rule, when Greek forces failed in their attempt to re-conquer Istanbul, and hence re-establish the Romantic vision of a greater Greece, Smyrna was razed in 1922. Of course, in the conflicting perspective, Izmir (Smyrna) was liberated by Turkish forces after being occupied by the invading Greeks in 1919, but was destroyed by fire. Turks refer to Istanbul and Izmir while Greeks still call the same cities Constantinpolis and Smyrna, demonstrating the unresolved nature of the conflict.

Greece, his Parisian writings are more saturated with the movement's techniques: *Tropic of Cancer* (1934) and *Black Spring* (1937). Also, Durrell made his first surrealist ventures after moving to Corfu from London: "The Cherries" (1936) "Asylum in the Snow" (1938), and "Zero"(1939). Among the Greek poets the two interacted with, Seferis developed his poetic talents in the Parisian community; and, the generation of poets that was forming during Durrell's and Miller's time in Greece (the mid and late 1930s) are noted for their heavy surrealist influences.

With Kolocotroni's anthology from Edinburgh, whom I have already mentioned in relation to Stanford Friedman's rejection of "Modernism" as a stable or even continuous term, we have another new view of Modernism growing outside the margins (ie: not in London). Kolocotroni succinctly outlines the distinctions that are important to Durrell and Miller in her important, recent anthology *Modernism*:

> More than an alternative chronology or genealogy of Modernism…., the 'Modernism' which this anthology attempts to frame and illuminate does not follow from 'Romanticism' or 'Symbolism', nor does it precede 'Post-modernism' as literary category. Its '-ism', in fact, is partly on trial here… Modernism comprises numerous, diverse and contesting, theories and practices which first flourished in a period that knew little of the term as it has now come to be understood. (Kolocotroni xvii)

In contrast to Levenson, Kolocotroni's periodization of Modernism allows for more overlapping coextensive movements within a general trend, rather than reading for a continuity among these movements.

She further notes that,

> The homogenisation of these diverse practices into Modernism as a movement and critical category occurred in the 1950s, by virtue of what Raymond Williams calls 'the post-war settlement and its accompanying, complicit academic endorsements'. The assumptions underlying this construction were firstly that the initial impetus of Modernism was over, and in its selective canonised form was thereafter to be known as 'High Modernism'; and secondly that the essence of the Modernist impulse was the spirit of formal experimentation. (Kolocotroni xvii)

What Kolocotroni rebels against here is the Anglo-centric approach to Modernism as a discrete movement. For instance, North's highly effective *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern* reads across 1922 as the formative year for Modernism, but within the context of keeping its focus "at least where English speakers are concerned" (6)[50]. Hence, North's reading across the major events of the year excludes such important conflicts as the Anatolia crisis between Greece and Turkey, likely because it did not influence Anglo-American writers significantly, though it did play a major role in shifting Greek responses to these writers and in how those who interacted with the Greeks returned to their own national literary movements. This is a distinction Durrell highlights too, emphasizing the very diverse materials coextensive with *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* in his *Key to Modern Poetry* (177).

For Durrell and Miller, as Modernists, this period in the 1920s is also distinct in that neither was publishing work and Durrell was still living in India. These two authors are late arrivals on the scene of Modernism, not publishing works of significance until 1934 and

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[50] For instance, see the list of overlapping events that comprises North's "Introduction" to *Reading 1922*, which betrays the Anglo-American focus (North 3-24). Even as other national interests arise, such as Egypt's control over archaeological digs, the impact is traced only to London-centred movements.

1935 respectively. This outsider position to the major events in the Modernist tradition is tellingly reflected in their *Kenosis*, their struggling with the texts of Modernism. Both were in a position of the Bloomian *ephebe*, struggling in an *agon* to place themselves in an established literary movement but to do so in a way that reflected their personal contribution.[51] "The agon then. It begins" (12) is even the opening of Durrell's first major literary endeavor, his third novel *The Black Book*[52]. As with Miller's earlier *Tropic of Cancer*, this struggle is overt yet almost entirely disregarded in criticism. Moreover, for Durrell, this was explicitly a nationalized struggle between the imposed home of England and the adopted home of Greece.

As for Miller, it was only after his time in Greece that he could return to America after his lengthy expatriation in continental Europe. Moreover, his second period of productivity, in which he produced his major texts after the 'Paris trilogy' of *Tropic of Cancer*, *Black Spring, and Tropic of Capricorn*, was marked by the influence of his time in Greece. Although Miller then turned to the American landscape, such as in *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* (a driving tour of the United States of America), he makes the point in his inscription to Alfred Perlès (Van Norden in *Tropic of Cancer*) on the title page of the 1940 typescript of *Quiet Days in Clichy*: "This was written in the Spring of 1940, upon my return from Greece, and is coincident with the writing of *The Colossus of Maroussi*, *The World of Sex*, and the first hundred pages of the *Rosy Crucifixion*" (Miller fonds 1.15). It was immediately after this period of writing that Miller departed on the lengthy travels that would become *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*, and while his Greek works are not always tied to his other projects, they are overlapping.

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[51] For perhaps the most influential reading of the struggle to create within a literary canon, and particularly in line with Eliot's notion of Tradition, see Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* and *A Map of Misreading*. Of significance, Bloom repeatedly draws on notions developed by Otto Rank and refers to him explicitly (*Anxiety* 99), Rank being an author of importance to both Durrell and Miller. See Morrison's "The Influence of Otto Rank" (135-144), Ferguson's *Henry Miller: A Life* (226-246), Spencer's "The Ambiguities of Incest" (436-448); and Gifford's "Phenomenology of Death" (13-38). Moreover, the elements of Rankian thought that Bloom draws out are precisely those that were of interest to Durrell and Miller as they took up their own struggle against their predecessors, such as the Anglo-American Modernists. It is also worth pointing out that Bloom's notion of misprision implies a correct reading that is strongly misread. There is not *mis*reading without an established truth; however, Durrell's and Miller's epistemology seems to be more in line, via their shared interest in Nietzsche, with an avoidance of 'misreading' and its implicit sense of a fall from past grace—misreading is displaced by simply reading, which is seen as already including the active re-creation of the text.

[52] This text is explicitly a struggle against the social and literary influences of London.

As a part of this struggle against the mainstream, Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* is typically regarded, when it is even remembered, as a text embroiled in censorship reform and with a view of sexuality that reflects the last carefree days of the expatriates in Paris before the outbreak of World War II. However, in its more literary endeavors, it explicitly works against the ongoing canon formation typified by the works of Eliot and Joyce. These references to writing within and against a literary context are often overlooked in favour of the more spectacular displays of contentious sexualities the novel presents; however, Miller's discussions of reading, writing, and literary history are prevalent at every point in the text. Early on, Miller's narrator discusses writing and the weight of the literary past with the character Carl: "Fundamentally Carl is a snob, an aristocratic little prick who lives in a dementia praecox kingdom all his own.... 'What does it prove if I write a book? What do we want with books anyway? There are too many books already'" (*Tropic* 63). In response, Miller's narrator claims: "I don't give a fuck any more what's behind me, or what's ahead of me. I'm healthy. Incurably healthy. No sorrows, no regrets. No past, no future. The present is enough for me. Day by day. Today! *Le bel aujourd'hui*!" (63). Despite the richly allusive nature of the novel itself, this rant against the potentially stagnating weight of tradition anticipates the later more direct argument he advances about the text at hand:

> Up to the present, my idea in collaborating with myself has been to get off the gold standard of literature. My idea briefly has been to present a resurrection of the emotions, to depict the conduct of a human being in the stratosphere of ideas, that is, in the grip of delirium. To paint a pre-Socratic being, a creature part goat, part Titan. In short, to erect a world on the basis of the *omphalos*, not on an abstract idea nailed to a cross. Here and there you may have come across neglected statues, oases untapped, windmills overlooked by Cervantes, rivers that run uphill, women with five and six breasts ranged longitudinally along the torso. (*Tropic* 224; italics original)

This move to an ancient pattern, which is remarkably similar to his contemporary experimentation with surrealism and automatic writing, notably sets up the straw man of a canonic "gold standard of literature" that he works against. This explains his integration, just after his OOMAHARUMOOMA passage, of a paragraph from Joyce's *Finegan's Wake* (Miller, *Tropic* 97; Joyce, *Finegan's* 180), which is undone by being decontextualized, and hence takes on a Surreal function. This is further troubled by his repetition of OOMAHARUMOOM later in the novel immediately followed by the dictum "Everything has to have a name" (259), which the novels gaps deny. Moreover, the erection of a literary world based on the omphalos, the navel of the world, points to the Philhellenism that would soon develop in Miller's oeuvre.

Durrell's and Miller's resistance against Eliot's and Joyce's influences should also be noted, and as Nicholls has argued:

> [For Eliot's poetry,] the only salvation lies in finding some transcendental model, which is what 'classicism' seems to have meant to Eliot before his turn

> to Anglicanism in 1927; as he put it in 'The Function of Criticism' (1923) classicists 'believe that men cannot go on without giving allegiance to something outside themselves'. (182)

Miller's position is clearly the antithesis of Eliot's notions and this is the nature of the resistance to mainstream Modernism the reader finds in both Durrell and Miller. Whether or not Miller succeeds in his attempt is somewhat beside the point, though it is worth noting that he both resists and is influenced by Eliot and Joyce. Miller also does not actually advocate abandoning intertextual relations among texts—his allusions and references attest to this. Instead, his abandoned "gold standard" has the catalytic nature of tradition for Eliot ("Tradition" 18) or the paralyzing anxiety of influence felt by Harold Bloom's *ephebe* before his strong reading.

Levenson, in a more historically oriented approach, traces the specific literary networks that developed and distributed this particular position within Anglo-American literary movements of the 1920s and 1930s. The institutional importance of the founding of *The Criterion* has already been noted, but Levenson's position is still worth emphasizing here:

> English modernism achieved its decisive formulation in the early twenties—not only because of legitimizing masterworks such as *Ulysses* or *The Waste Land* but because there developed a rhetorically effective doctrine to explain and justify that body of work. For this rhetoric and doctrine Eliot was in large measure responsible. (*Genealogy* 213)

In contrast, the Modernist canon is now being subsumed in what critics more frequently regard as the peripheral movements surrounding Modernism, or the Modernism*s* that Peter

Nicholls locates around the core of the movement centred on the "boys of 1914" who led to the 1922 publications and as promulgated in Eliot's *The Criterion*.

While Miller had hoped for support from Eliot, and did have two works appear in *The Criterion*, his publishers were primarily French and American. Durrell, however, was more directly tied to Eliot and Eliot's sphere of influence by having Faber & Faber as his British publisher. The more pleasant recollections—such as Durrell's own in "The Other Eliot" and "Tse lio t" or those by favorable critics—recall such things as Eliot's comments that Durrell's *The Black Book*: "is the first piece of work by a new English writer to give me any hope for the future of prose fiction. If he has been influenced by any writers of my generation, the influences have been digested, and he has produced something different" (*The Black Book* front flyleaf, first edition). In the same vein there are Durrell's high praises for *The Criterion* (Key 177) and his statement "in 1922 we stumble upon *The Waste Land* of T. S. Eliot, which altered the whole face of poetry, and *Ulysses* by James Joyce, whose technical innovations were to alter the face of prose" (*Key* 62). It is, however, his afterthought to the latter statement that is crucial here: "in neither case, however, for the better" (*Key* 62). Joyce remains a mostly silent figure for Durrell, apart from his revision of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* such that the "Once upon a time" (Joyce, *A Portrait* 1) that opens Joyce's novel becomes the ending "Once upon a time" of *The Alexandria Quartet* (877).[53] Durrell discusses Joyce positively and with attention to contemporary scholarship in his lectures at the California Institute of Technology in 1974, but in Harold Bloom's 'strong' sense, turning Joyce to Durrell's own interests.[54]

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[53] Beatrice Skordili, in private conversation, has pointed out the dual nature of this phrase at the end of *The Alexandria Quartet* where each word mirrors the nature of the four novels: "Once" is *Justine's* past tense memorialization of Alexandria, "upon" is *Balthazar's* palimpsest on *Justine*, "a" is the new single-perspective and third person narration of *Mountolive* in contrast to the multiple perspectives of the other works, and "time" is Durrell's frequest and repeated insistence that *Clea* is the novel that finally introduced time into the novel series through its forward development.

In regard to Durrell's relationship with Eliot, who was his editor at Faber & Faber, Durrell does not mention Eliot's rejection of his work for *The Criterion* ("Asylum in the Snow"). We also do not see a repetition in his published works of his 1939 comments to Elizabeth Smart[55]:

> And don't let the jackass of editors bother you . Sit always on the good round cushion of your own esteem ; the moral for poets is : "The customer is always wrong ". Apart of [from?] Seven and NEW in England no one will touch my verse ; I have even argued with Eliot until he turned green , I even read bits at him , right in the eye . But in England they think me no good . Yet I can't think them right, however much I try . (Letter to Elizabeth Smart n.pag)

This bitter sting at Eliot points to the influences exerted, even including firm directions for Durrell to be only a novelist or poet, but not both because it is incompatible with Eliot's notion of "the laziness necessary for poetry," a position that led to significant tensions between Durrell and his editor Eliot (MacNiven, *A Biography* 312).

Miller's marginal notes in his copy of Durrell's *Black Book*, a novel he claimed to edit 1938[56], further illustrate the ties and resistance to Eliot's influence, though Durrell is still the figure negotiating between Miller and Eliot. Miller appears to have been separated from his copy of the Villa Seurat edition of *The Black Book: An Agon*, but he replaced it with the 1962 Cardinal paperback edition[57]. Since its 1938 publication, the book was deemed unprintable by Faber & Faber and was not permitted distribution in the United Kingdom, the United States, or Canada. However, in the wake of the success of *Justine* and the *Alexandria Quartet* as a whole, *The Black Book* was eventually reprinted in 1959 by Maurice Girodius in the Olympia Press in Paris, which was followed by Dutton, Faber & Faber, and even the book of the month club.

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[54] Joyce is tied to Durrell's notion of the "RELATIVITY WORLD," and he gives a three-part "Instant 'Ulysses' (add Littey water and stir)" that reflects his own Ancient, Medieval, and Modern divisions in *The Avignon Quintet*. Even under his "Anna Was, Livia Is, and Plurabelle's To Be" distinctions, he makes a note to discuss "Joyce gave 13 lectures on Hamlet in 1912-13," further tying Joyce to his own preoccupations with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Durrell, CalTech Lecture n.pag). Durrell's Joyce is very much his own rather than very much Joyce's.

[55] Durrell is also known for introducing Smart to his friend George Barker, and hence he played a role in what may be the most famous literary affair of the Twentieth Century.

[56] See the recto of the dustjacket back cover of the 1938 Obelisk Press edition. Miller is listed as editor of the book and editor of the Villa Seurat series.

Miller acquired the first American paperback edition after the Dutton hardcover in 1960, and his bookplate marks the pages on which he left marginalia: 2, 14-32, 41-46, 66-70, and 185-191 (Durrell, *Black Book* Henry n.pag). The passages mark out two themes in the novel: the trope of Death, which Miller presumably saw as an echo of his own *Tropic of Cancer*, and surreal experimentation, which was likely also seen as tied to his association with Durrell since the marked surreal passages all use the trope of 'snow,' which was already firmly established in Durrell's "Zero" and "Asylum in the Snow," which were dedicated to Miller and Anais Nin, respectively. Three of these passages also reflect Miller's interest in the more sexual themes of the novel, invoking the major sexual encounters: Gracie (14-32, 41-46), Hilda and Connie (66-70), and Kate (185-191).

The death theme is salient here, and it marks a distinction between Miller and Eliot that Durrell expropriated. Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* opens with his exploration of the theme he explored in this correspondence with Michael Fraenkel, in which he made his comments on the unknown: Death. While is unlikely that Miller is alluding to Eliot, the ties would certainly not be lost on Durrell, and hence the allusion to Miller's first page of *Tropic of Cancer* that opens Durrell's *The Black Book* is doubly allusive. Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* begins with the declarations: "We are all alone here and we are dead.... We must get in step, a lock step, toward the prison of death" (23). It is in this context that Miller makes a marginal outline around left side of the paragraph on only the second page of his copy of Durrell's *The Black Book*:

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[57] I am endebted to William Godshalk for his generosity in allowing me access to his private collection, as well as to Charles Sligh for making these materials available to me. Both have been very supportive and insightful in our discussions of these materials as well.

> This is the day I have chosen to begin this writing, because today *we are dead among the dead*; and this is an agon for the dead, a chronicle for the living.... There is a *correspondence* between the present, this numbness, inertia, and that past reality of death, whose meaning is symbolic, mythical, but real also in its symptom. As if, lying here, in this mimic death at morning, we were recreating a bit from the past: *a crumb* of the death we have escaped. Yes, even though the wild ducks fall in a tangle of wings among the marshes of *Bivarie*...; even though the sea flogs the tough black button of rock on which this, our house, is built. The *correspondence* of deadness with deadness is complete. (2; emphasis added)

There are a number of complex elements at play here. The "marshes of Bivarie" mark the stream flowing into the bay in front of the White House in Kalami where Durrell lived while on Corfu: Βιβαρι[58]. Hence, the novel has autobiographical implications, and the repetition of

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[58] This mis-transciption of names is caught by the Greek translator, Michael Kokolakis, who worked from the 1938 Obelisk Press edition (15, 16)

"correspondence" takes on a double meaning given Durrell's contemporaneous correspondence with both T. S. Eliot and Miller.

The echo of Miller's "we are dead" is compounded by Durrell's and Miller's mutual use of a word that is otherwise rare in their works—Miller's second sentence states "There is not a crumb of dirt anywhere" (23) and Durrell echoes with "a crumb of the death we have escaped" (2), which Miller has marginally noted. However, Durrell's novel expands on this deadness through a double allusion to the dead earth of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, which he even directly mentions in a passage Miller has marked, likely for its references to the snow. It is a comic will in which Death Gregory (the London diarist and foil narrator to the protagonist Lawrence Lucifer) bequeaths: "To my father a copy of the *Waste Land* and a kiss on his uncomprehending, puzzled face" (Durrell, *Black Book* Henry 191; Durrell, *Black* 212). This places Eliot in a paternal and Oedipal position as the creator who must be overcome. Moreover, it casts Death Gregory as an Eliot-influenced foil, huddled amongst death in the snow-buried Regina Hotel of London, which only glimmers "in winter, when the snow falls" because this dead land is one "whose seasons come and go without any sense of change. It is medieval in its blindness" (Durrell, *Black* 22).

Death Gregory, however, is the past being overcome by Lawrence Lucifer, the protagonist and frame narrator, who is being reborn to overcome this wintry death—the agon of *The Black Book: An Agon* then takes on the form of a struggle in the manner outlined by Harold Bloom in *The Anxiety of Influence*, although Durrell is explicit and announced the struggle of the book in his correspondence with Eliot ("Letters to T. S." 348-358). Lawrence Lucifer, the protagonist, takes on Mediterranean vigor and life in contrast to Death Gregory's "English Death," what Durrell calls "the mummy wrappings—the cultural swaddling clothes" (*Black* 9). More explicitly, Durrell announces in his 1959 preface "*The Black Book* was truly an *agon* for me…. It built itself out of a long period of despair and frustration during which I knew that my work, though well contrived, was really derivative" (*Black* 9). In this context, overcoming the English Death takes on a number of clearer references, for while Durrell admits "the reader will discern here and there the influence of *Tropic of Cancer* in many passages of *The Black Book*," he is laying out his typical false trail[59] (*Black* 10). My reading, then, contrasts with Morton Levitt's. The theme of germination, which I have already noted, is clearly present in Levitt's evaluation of Miller's influence on Durrell, but he contends "In theme, in language and in tune, *The Black Book* is clearly derivative of *Tropic of Cancer*: Miller's seed obviously fell on fallow soil…. The parallels with Miller's first novel are again obvious" (Levitt 302). This too easily accepts Durrell's comment "I'm the first writer to be fertilized by H.M." (Levitt 302; quoting Wickes, *A Private* 90). While there are many allusions to Miller, they are often doubled, using Miller to position Durrell's work against Eliot and other mainstream modernists. The struggle between the emerging author and his various influences relates more to his English education than his friendship with Miller, whose style and disinterest in form did little to alter Durrell's. Formally and stylistically, Durrell echoes the Victorians and Modernists, from whom he draws most of his allusions.

Even at this early date, Durrell is positioning his alliances away from Eliot and toward his new 'uncles' in Greece. Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* remains among the dead, and the surrealist and sexual passages Miller highlights in his copy of *The Black Book*

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[59] Most of Durrell's overt references to another text as an influence lead to very little material but serve to point away from the more obvious references.

(presumably places where "the reader will discern here and there the influence of *Tropic of Cancer*") are in the London sections of the book, and Durrell distinguishes them against Eliot's "dead earth." In contrast, Durrell repositions his own narrator in a rebirth occurring amidst the fertility of Greece (*Black* 244). In this way, while Durrell refers to Joyce, Lawrence, Miller, and other Modernist contemporaries, he positions his own *agon*—and by juxtaposition, Miller's "gob of spit in the face of art" (*Tropic* 24)—against Eliot.

With regard to Miller, who did publish two pieces in *The Criterion* (one on Anais Nin), Eliot rejected Ezra Pound's review of *Tropic of Cancer* and would not allow Miller to use his comments on the book for publicity. Gottesman outlines this incident:

> Pound's review was apparently written for the *Criterion* in 1935, but Eliot, the journal's editor, declined to publish it, despite having expressed admiration for the book. He once wrote: '*Tropic of Cancer* seems to me a rather remarkable piece of work...actually a great deal better both in depth of insight and of course in actual writing than *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. (6).

In his review, Pound wrote: "The Bawdy will welcome this Bawdy book with guffaws of appreciation... but if an obscene book is obscene because of any vileness in the author's mind, this book is certainly not obscene" (87-88). Gottesman further speculates Eliot may have rejected the review due to "the free-associational quality of Pound's characteristically strong and strongly worded opinions of English writers" (6).

This background I have traced for their novels suggets the appropriateness to Durrell and Miller of Harold Bloom's argument for Modernism's gossip: what Nicholls calls "hegemonic Modernism" is a construction of the canon-creating activities of Eliot himself and New Criticism. In a characteristically emphatic fashion, Bloom states:

> Modernism in literature has not passed; rather, it has been exposed as never having been there. Gossip grows old and becomes myth; myth grows older, and becomes dogma. Wyndham Lewis, Eliot and Pound gossiped with one another; the New Criticism aged them into a myth of Modernism; now the antiquarian Hugh Kenner has dogmatized this myth….; the grand triumph of Kenner is his judgment that Wallace Stevens represented the culmination of the poetics of Edward Lear. (*Map of Misreading* 28)

Lear, conveniently, is tied to both Durrell and Miller through his long-term attachment to Corfu, and due to the fame of this tie, Durrell eventually edited the volume *Lear's Corfu: An Anthology Drawn From the Painter's Letters* with his friend Marie Aspioti, a Corfiot.[60] However, more to my point, Bloom's argument lends support to Durrell's and Miller's attempts to avoid becoming caught up in the political gossip (to continue Bloom's metaphor) of this social network. This view also agrees with Kolocotroni in arguing that, therefore, the multiple directions taken during the rise of what has become hegemonic Modernism can be justifiably read as loosely connected and competing, though without being mutually influenced. Levenson's notion of the "institutionalization" of Modernism through the accumulation of cultural capital seen in such organs as *The Criterion*, or Nicholls' "hegemonic modernism" of Eliot, reflect the same preoccupations as voiced by Kolocotroni and Friedman. The social network of Modernism bears examination in tandem with the aesthetic differences it outlines, and which the inclusive term "masks" (Kolocotroni vii).

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[60] This booklet, published only on Corfu in 1965, has now been integrated by Faber and Faber as a supplement in the most recent paperback edition of *Prospero's Cell* in 2004. For a more extensive discussion, see John Maynard's "Two Mad-Dog Englishmen in the Corfu Sun: Lawrence Durrell and Edward Lear" (255-269).

Such synergistic approaches typify Durrell's and Miller's works, works that take what is of use from varying movements and then rebel against what stirs their resistance.

ii. Greek Modernism

The alternative movement of Greek Modernism and the presence of Philhellenism in mainstream Modernism are important topics given the distinctions drawn here and come to play a crucial role in these authors' writings. Biographically, both Durrell and Miller began making ties to Greece in the year following *Tropic of Cancer*'s publication. Furthermore, while the Classical references in the novel should still be noted, especially for their similarity to the *nostos* or return of Modernism as described by Jeffrey Perl in *The Tradition of Return*. It is important, however, that they are distinct from the nostalgic desire for a pre-Fall state implicit in Eliotic Classicism and that Perl explores. In 1935, Durrell moved to Corfu and began a correspondence with Miller. This also marks the beginning of the two authors' association with movements in Greek Modernism, which itself is typically traced as a growth from Parisian Surrealism with affinities to English Modernism. This is, in large part, due to the large number of Greek poets active from the 1930s onward who spent a significant amount of time in Paris and occasionally London. Among these poets, George Seferis was the most important to Greek literary movements, and he befriended both Durrell and Miller, as Miller describes in his travel narrative, *The Colossus of Maroussi*, which outlines his time in Greece just prior to World War II.

For Greek Modernism, unlike Anglo-American Modernism, the 1930s were a rising period, but while the weight of the English language Modernists could be felt, the most pervasive influences were Surrealist, coming from Paris, and also involving the Alexandrian poet Constantine Cavafy. George Katsimbalis[61], a close friend to George Seferis, "prepared and published the first substantial bibliography of Cavafy's work as early as 1943" (Keeley, *Inventing* 9), and in 1935,

> working anonymously with another friend and fellow critic of this age named Andreas Karandonis, launched and financed what as to be the most important Athenian literary journal to emerge between the wars, *Ta Nea Grammata (The New Letters)*, publishing new work by the best poets of the older generation, Angelos Sikelianos, and by the two future Nobel laureates Seferis and Odyseus Elytis, among other important writers who made up the now famous 'Generation of the Thirties'." (Keeley, *Inventing* 9-10)

To this important moment in the development in Greek Modernism and Greek literature of the Twentieth Century, Keeley adds the very direct reminder: "All these people—but especially Seferis and Katsimbalis—became the companions of Miller and Durrell on their prewar journey towards a partial understanding and uninhibited love of contemporary Greece, a country each ended up creating in his own image" (*Inventing* 10-11). This dense circle of interconnected figures remained in contact throughout their careers. Moreover, Durrell and Seferis' correspondence, especially that which is held in smaller and less-used archives, points to the warmth of their relationship long after their supposed break. Based on their shared Philhellenism and Durrell's translation of Greek authors, Seferis' friendship and professional relationship with Durrell up until the late 1950s was seen as warm, but most critics have regarded it as ended by their meeting on Cyprus during ENOSIS (the guerilla resistance to British rule prior to the Turkish invasion). This tense meeting of the two when they were both serving opposing governments came just before Durrell's publication of *Bitter Lemons*, which describes Cyprus as this time. Nonetheless, they continued a friendly correspondence and met each other whenever possible, so critics' anticipation of a break does not reflect a real one. Seferis also maintained a warm correspondence with Miller to the end.

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[61] Katsimbalis was a highly influential editor and personality in Athenian life and Greek literary culture in general. He is also the colossus from the title of Miller's *Colossus of Maroussi*. Beaton describes Katsimbalis in his social context:

> Wholly committed to literature, and to the development and promotion of a specifically *Greek* literature, Katsimbalis never wrote anything himself.... Katsimbalis was at once a Maecenas (a wealthy and influential patron) and an almost Ezra Pound (publicist and unpaid literary agent) to his friends.... [T]his extrovert and inspired talker would set himself, in his private hours, one of the most thankless tasks in the service of literature, to compile exhaustive bibliographies of modern Greek writers. Today, Katsimbalis is rightly seen as the father of modern Greek bibliography. (Beaton, *George Seferis* 81)

Notably, for the context of this study, Katsimbalis was a long-term personal friend to both Durrell and Miller, as well as most major poets in Greece in his lifetime, including Seferis. Though he resisted Cavafy's influence, he did significant scholarly work on the Alexandrian poet and had seen him near the end of Cavafy's life.

Cyprus was annexed by Britain in 1914 after 300 years of Ottoman rule, and ENOSIS is the struggle for union with Greece, which became a military struggle in 1955. The United Nations set up a peacekeeping force in 1964, followed by the Turkish invasion in 1974, which established the still-standing division between North and South Cyprus. The importance and depth of feeling about Cyprus in Greece cannot be overestimated. For a more detailed discussion of Cypriot history from a postcolonial perspective, see Thompson et al.'s recent "Cyprus After History" (282-4) or for Durrell's involvement, see Tourney's "Colonial Encounters: Lawrence Durrell's *Bitter Lemons of Cyprus*" (158-168). Thompson and his interlocutors articulate, in dialogue, the tensions over the long colonial history of Cyprus, which has not been Cypriot for centuries, if an authentic sense of Cyprus can be said to exist. The Ottoman, Turkish, and British occupations have left the island fraught with a current colonialism rather than a postcolonial memory of past occupations, and cultural hybridity is palpable. In his own work, Thompson clarifies this more directly when he discusses the Cypriot poet, Mehmet Yashin: "Postcolonial Cyprus, Yashin implies, is not classifiable; seen from certain angle, it reflects a sheer multiplicity of overlapping and interconnected cultures and languages" (Thompson, "Homelessness" 106).

Since Hittite rule of Cyprus (1500 BC), the island has seen a series of colonial occupiers from the Egyptians, Dorians, Persians, and Greeks through to the Roman Empire, displaced by the Byzantine Empire, the English (Richard the Lionheart), French, Venetian, Ottoman, and finally British rule until the 1960s when strife led to the current division of the island between Greek and Turkish interests in 1974. Borders between the North (Turksish) and South (Greek) only opened, in a very limited way, in 2003 and the island remains divided. As Tourney explains, Durrell's fictional residence book, *Bitter Lemons*, which draws on his years on Cyprus working for the British, takes place during ENOSIS, the guerilla struggle for unification with Greece and the end of British rule[62]. Tourney locates Durrell firmly in the colonial tradition of infantilizing representation of Cypriots for the purpose of justifying British colonial rule.

While Durrell's semi-fictional travel narrative of his time on Cyprus explicitly states "This not a political book," this position has not been widely accepted and was belied by the book's winning the Duff Cooper Prize in 1957, a literary award named in honour of the British diplomat. Since its inception, the prize has gone to a book of history, biography, or politics (Durrell's *Bitter Lemons* fits all three categories, including the fourth very rare potential for poetry to win, since the novel includes his poem of the same title). Other winning titles include Alan Moorehead's, *Gallipoli*, which won in 1956, and most recently Mark Mazower's *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews, 1430-1950*, a book about the Greek city Thessaloniki, which won in 2004. These factors support the standard scholarly opinion that Durrell was rejected by Seferis, amongst his other Greek friends, due to his political involvements in Cyprus as the Director of Information Services for the British colonial powers.[63] Nevertheless, Seferis' letter to Durrell, 16 October 1965 (held in the Bibliothéque Lawrence Durrell, University of Paris X), apologizes for not having visited during Durrell's then recent stay on Corfu, makes arrangements for a personal visit with Durrell and his wife Claude in the South of France, and inscribes the letter "With much love to you both" (2). The same collection also holds an unnumbered postcard to Durrell, postmarked 18 November 1967, which shows an image of a café table in the Plaka, under the Athenian Acropolis, with the inscription "Plaka is expecting you with all our love and best wishes for the New Year 1968" (verso). This is followed, again in the same unnumbered collection, by an affectionate letter from 19 January 1969. All of this takes to task the easy dismissal of the continued Philhellenic thread in Durrell's works after *Bitter Lemons* (i.e. his most significant novel sequences, all of which are rich in allusions to modern and ancient Greece). Rather than dismissing these ties as unimportant given his ostensible break with his Greek peers, these correspondences demonstrate the pervasiveness of Durrell's Philhellenic ties, both as a writer and correspondent.

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[62] It is worthwhile to emphasize Durrell's residencies in a number of politically tense locations: pre-independence India, Greece during the Nazi invasion, Egypt during WWII, Cyprus during Enosis, Argentina under Perón, Belgrade under Tito (which led to his thriller spy novel, *White Eagles Over Serbia*), and even Rhodes during the disassembly of British rule after WWII. Though forced to these locales by invaders or financial need, his biography charts a series of ties to locations and moments of colonial decline and in the midst of fierce political unrest.

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[63] For further details, see David Roessel's "'This is not a political book': *Bitter Lemons* as British Propoganda (Lawrence Durrell and Cyprus)" (235); for a post-colonial reading Petra Tourney's "Colonial Encounters: Lawrence Durrell's *Bitter Lemons of Cyprus*" (160, 162, and 165-166); Vangelis Calotychos' "'Lawrence Durrell, the Bitterest Lemon?': Cyps and Brits Loving Each Other to Death in Cyprus, 1953-57"; and Beaton's "The Gift of Seferis," which outlines Seferis' and Durrell's time on Cyprus.

Furthermore, an unnumbered letter in the Perlès Collection at the University of Victoria shows Durrell's friendship with Seferis was not strictly for politeness, since Seferis' correspondence with Alfred Perlès (the person Van Norden is based on in Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*), 21 October 1968, which derived from his relationship with Durrell and Miller, makes the affectionate note: "I missed your book on Miller, but I have heard about you from Larry. I am glad to learn of your intention to settle in Greece. Crete perhaps might be a good place for you.... Do ring me up when you come; I am looking forward to meeting you" (n.pag). All of this conflicts with the established critical consensus that after Durrell's time on Cyprus and Miller's American trials, contact with Seferis was irreparably harmed (MacNiven, *Lawrence Durrell* 418-419; Beaton, *George Seferis* 316-317; Keeley, "Durrell, Miller, and their Greek Friends" 133-157; and Roessel, *In Byron's Shadow* 239-89). In 2005, Papastavrou-Koroniotaki discussed recently released confidential files on Durrell that address the covert nature of his position on Cyprus and his full awareness of the risk to his Greek contacts (21-47). All of this points to Durrell's and Miller's continued engagements with Greek colleagues throughout their careers, despite the predominant opinion of scholarly work.

There is another crucial distinction to be made here. Critics, such as Jonathan Perl, have noted the importance of the notion of nostalgia to Modernism, with its desire for a return, the homeward journey, and the *agon* of such a passage; however, this is with regard to a tradition and a past that is not imminent and local. Keeley notes the same issues as at work in Seferis, and Greek Modernism in general, but with a crucial distinction:

> any Greek intellectual, whether or not a reader of Seferis's work, could quote in public: "Wherever I travel Greece wounds me." But the poem was written

> at a time when the wounding was caused first of all by nostalgia, and even that was colored by the self-irony implicit in the poem's title: "In the Manner of G.S." By 1939 Seferis's state of mind left little room for either nostalgia or irony.... A March 1939 entry [in his journal] defines the "Situation in Europe" by way of a passage from Homer's description of the land of the Cyclopes (as translated here by Robert Fagles):
>
> *They have no meeting place for council, no laws either,*
> *no, up on the mountain peaks they live in arching caverns—*
> *each law to himself, ruling his wives and children,*
> *not a care in the world for any neighbor.*
>
> Seferis' comment: "Exactly: the era of the Cyclopes." (*Inventing* 6)

This sets out the distinction that Durrell made in his essay "Spirit of Place" and that several critics who examine this circle have noted repeatedly. While nostalgia has played a significant role in Modernism, the kind of sentiment surrounding epigrammatic ties to a tradition or Eliot's classicism with a canon differs for the Greek Modernists and those who worked in their influence, as many critics have noted. The *nostos* and its *algos* or *agon* is not the same from within a still living language, mythology, literary tradition, and landscape. In such circumstance, as Seferis argues with regard to Cavafy in his essay comparing the Alexandrian poet with T. S. Eliot, the weight of a past that allusively lives on in a present that inhabits the same streets, cities, and confrontations is not a nostalgia that requires a homeward journey to a foreign land. As in Homer, it is a nostalgia for a lived home.

Pointing to this affinity between the past and present in his Banquet Speech for the Nobel Prize, Seferis makes the humorous though pointed note, "On a observé, l'an dernier, autour de cette table, l'énorme différence qui existe entre les découvertes de la science d'aujourd'hui et la littérature; qu'entre un drame grec et un drame moderne, il n'y a pas grande difference" ("Giorgos Seferis – Banquet" n.pag). The "no great difference" between past and present is telling, as is his emphasis on it, and it tells his audience of the elision of past and present he sees in his homeland.

A modern example of Seferis' "no great difference" appears in the new Athenian Metro. In Syntagma Square (Constitution Square in the centre of Athens, one of the busiest transportation hubs for public transit) stands the modern Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and under the square in the long stairways to the Metro, lies an excavated grave of an unknown soldier behind glass, visible to thousands of commuters every day[64]. The new Metro has, throughout its excavation, retained ancient materials in the glass walls, visible to commuters in the stairs, in the trains (in the tunnel walls), and in the stations. The ancient lies directly beneath the modern monument in the newest large-scale engineering project in the ancient/modern city. In this way, much like Seferis' contention that "il n'y a pas grande difference" between ancient Greek drama and modern drama, he is pointing to the immediacy of allusions to the ancient past in a location where the past and present overlap and the presence of the past continually asserts itself.

As an example of this, see Martha Klironomos' "Ancient *Ανάμνισις*, National *Μνήμη* in the Poetry of Giorgos Seferis," where she discusses "*Seferis's poetry as a manifestation of variant modes of historical consciousness and in relation to various schemata that exemplify both European modernity and nationalist ideology*" (215; italics original). As she notes, in an approach to Seferis that is highly akin to that which I suggest for Durrell and Miller: "Placing memory at the forefront defines our interpretive task in two ways: it looks at the interplay between ancient and modern texts but does so in a manner that moves beyond a consideration of 'intertextuality' in the limited sense in which it has been discussed in previous commentary" (217). This is a crucial distinction given the tension over Eliot's notion of tradition,[65] which bears a significant influence on critical approaches to Modernism, and the tendency in Greek Modernism to look to Cavafy's use of the ancient to describe the modern.

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[64] I am indebted to Beatrice Skordili for pointing this out to me and for our discussions of this site.

There is a further tie here as well. Miller's invocations of the historical Greek landscapes in *The Colossus of Maroussi* are more deeply embedded in history than he is typically willing to admit. Despite his protestations that he was unaware of Classical literature (much like his untrue claim to have never read *Hamlet* before embarking on the *Hamlet* correspondence with Michael Fraenkel), the allusions in his travel narrative to Ancient Greek literature are rich and unique in his oeuvre. Likewise, despite his claims to know no Greek whatsoever, Miller did inscribe a copy of *The Colossus of Maroussi* to Matthew Jennet in Greek[66]. While it is speculation that this Philhellenic turn may have been one of Seferis' influences on Miller, his influence on Durrell is more explicit. Apart from Durrell's form in *The Alexandria Quartet*, the first Greek translation of *Justine* (published in 1961 the same year as *Clea*, the fourth book of the Quartet) is given a subtitle that matches Seferis' most famous poem, which itself explores the relationship between myth, history, and present experiences: *Ioustine: Mythistorema* in comparison to Seferis' *Mythistorema*. The confluence would be lost on no Greek reader. Durrell's novel is subtitled with a word invented by the Greek national poet to title his most famous poetic work, coincidentally published the same year Durrell first arrived in Greece. Klironomos elucidates this notion of 'myth-history' further:

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[65] More closely to Eliot, she argues: "A consideration of memory in the modernist text, then, need not merely restrict itself to explication of the devices used to recall ancient literary tradition. Such a method posits the relationship between ancient and modern texts solely as a unidirectional one in which the former is viewed as originary and authoritative, and the latter as derivative and revisionist. Rather, the approach presented here views the relationship between such texts as an interactive one—both *dialogical*, in the sense that it recalls several historical and social meanings of memory at *play* with each other; and, *agonistic*, in recognizing how competing mnemonic concepts embodied in a poetic text can both connote and frustrate meaning" (217; italics original).

[66] Private correspondence with Jennet, November 2005.

> the reader… can pursue a number of interpretive paths that are contingent upon similarities and differences between antiquity and modernity…. Yet, because these concepts of *anamnesis* and *mneme* are not fully integrated… the attainment of total understanding is often found to be as fleeting as the process of remembering itself. (217; italics original)

This relationship between intertextuality, Eliot's sense of tradition, historical consciousness, and nationalist approaches to literature and locale informs my approach to Durrell's and Miller's representations of Greece: an obvious element of Durrell's work and a highly pregnant component of Miller's. The two are united with the Greek Modernists in their resistance to Eliot's notion of tradition, and they develop the aporetic nature of their notion of the 'unknown' in this nexus of ideas, especially in the gaps they characteristically create in references to Antiquity in order to provide "the reader… [with] a number of interpretive paths that are contingent" (217).

Adding to this overlapping correspondence network are many internal ties between these authors and others. Seferis also corresponded with T. S. Eliot, who was a poet of much importance to Seferis, as did both Durrell and Miller, and it is through this tie to Eliot, Durrell, and Miller that Seferis is also tied to Anglo-American Modernism. This connection, however, is mitigated by his Greek nationalism and attention to the affinities between Eliot and his predecessor, Constantine Cavafy. As the notable translator of Cavafy and Seferis, Edmund Keeley has noted,

> The tone [in Seferis' *Mythistorema*] appears to represent, in an unmistakably Greek setting, the 'Waste Land feeling' that Seferis suggested (in a 1948 essay on T. S. Eliot) 'runs through all the poetic expression of our times,' a feeling that he tells us 'an old man' called Cavafy was the first to bring into Greek poetry (certainly without influence from Eliot). (*Inventing* 62)

This shifts the primacy of Seferis' "Waste Land feeling," which is not quite the same as Eliot's poem itself, to Cavafy's recasting of the present through the schema of the past. Moreover,

> though Seferis himself admits having learned from what he called Eliot's 'dramatic manner of expression,' what characterizes [*Mythistorema*] *is not Eliot's eclectic allusiveness but the subtle impregnation of a contemporary landscape with symbolic overtones that emerge naturally from the literal details of that landscape and, along with this, the plausible linking of present and distant past by way of a single allusion to a specifically Greek mythology*: the dangerous rocks called the Symplagades [in this instance]" (Keeley, *Inventing* 62; emphasis added)

Keeley is not alone in this evaluation either, and Durrell has commented on Seferis' "temperamental relationship with T. S. Eliot [which would] strike anyone who knew them both, for they had much in common" ("On George Seferis" 7). To this, he adds the pregnant statement "When Eliot speaks of 'getting every ounce of tradition behind each word' one thinks of Seferis, so deeply steeped in the ancient Greek tragedy, and yet so modern in his approach.... Both poets felt that their point of departure had been the French Symbolists, and particularly Laforge and Rimbaud" ("On George Seferis" 7).

For Seferis, who was the first translator of *The Waste Land* in Greek, the tension over the struggle with tradition and Modernism's nostalgic return to Classical and Hellenistic materials is tainted by the fact of seeing such things as a part of everyday life. As Beaton argues, Seferis shifted discussion of Greece from the ancient to the modern: "Through his impact on Durrell, Henry Miller, and other British and American writers, Seferis brought about a revolution in the way later generations have viewed his country: no longer a museum-piece of the past but as a place of vibrant, dionysiac energy" (*George Seferis* xi). Seferis is also a key figure in the history and direction of these trends, having been both a major nationalist poet, brother in law to the president, and a high-ranking public official throughout his career.[67] This creation of a strong relationship between past and present, which seems to be a consistent feature of Greek Modernism, is prominent in Seferis' works and his readings of Cavafy in particular, and this distinction between Cavafy and Eliot is precisely what Seferis sets out as "The Greek Style," a particularly important distinction since Cavafy also predates Eliot, indicating that while there are many affinities between the Greek Modernists and Eliot's particular modes of Modernism, these are not an instance of mimicry.

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[67] Seferis' important role is widely acknowledged in the critical scholarship. As Beaton summarizes,

> As a poet, Seferis won international acclaim between the 1940s and the 1970s for his thought-provoking lyric voice and powerful evocations of what Lawrence Durrell termed the 'spirit of place.'…. In Greece itself, no other writer has exercised such a dominant influence since the Second World War. C.P. Cavafy, whose work is probably better known today, has been the object of imitation and pastiche, but Seferis has had successors; Seferis' poetry stands in a clear historical line between the great voices of the past (Solomos, Kalvos, Palamas, Sikelianos, Cavafy himself) and almost all the major figures since. (Beaton, *George Seferis* xi)

This is reiterated by a number of authors and scholars, and Valaoritis notably writes: "Until then [1939], in Greece, we had been more familiar with T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, from Seferis' translations" (48).

Eliot's importance to Greek Modernism is almost exclusively mitigated by Seferis' interpretation of Eliot in his various translations, all of which are poetic translations and hence should be considered interpretations. Anastasiadou's concisely summarizes the situation in her "Subverting Eliot's Modernism: The First Postwar Generation of Greek Poets," where she places poetic responses to Eliot in the context of the cultural and historical contingencies of mid-century Greece:

> The person who paved the way for Eliot's renown in Greece was Seferis.... [T]he majority of the postwar poets acknowledge the role of Seferis's 1936 translation of *The Waste Land* in their initiation into Eliot's work.... [H]e basically introduced Eliot's work to them and... their relationship with the Anglo-American poet was largely determined and defined by their relationship with Seferis's work. (194)

Seferis' timeline for involvements in Anglo-American Modernism also loosely originates from his December 1931 discovery of T. S. Eliot's works, which follows after many years of contact with the French Modernists during his time in Paris studying law (Beaton, *Seferis* 107); his 1933 first translation of Eliot's *The Waste Land* (122), which was to be published three years later in 1936 (150); and his 1950 re-translation and writing of a formal introduction to "The Waste Land" (284). Given the potential for influence from Eliot on Seferis, it is also worth noting (whether ironic or not) Durrell's anecdote: "As a young consul in London, Seferis announced to a friend in Athens: 'There is a chap here who must have read my poems, at any rate he is influenced by them. He is called T. S. Eliot'" (Durrell, "On George Seferis" 7). Whether apocryphal or not, Seferis carefully ties Eliot to his previous interest in Cavafy and the French Modernists. This overlap continues, and as Raizis notes, "Cavafy's achievement as a modern poet was first made known to the anglophone [sic] world by... E. M. Forster. He had some of Cavafy's representative poems published in *The Criterion* of T. S. Eliot (1924)" in Valassoupoulo's translation (244). In this way, Seferis had both personal and literary-historical grounds for placing primacy on Cavafy's "Greek Style."

At this point, I will put my argument on hold for the moment and illustrate the distinctions under discussion by turning to Eliot's *The Waste Land*. For instance, with regard to allusions and Eliot's notion of tradition, we as readers may be able to quickly find the allusions in the opening lines of "The Waste Land":

> April is the cruelest month, breeding
> Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
> Memory and desire, stirring
> Dull roots with spring rain. (23)

Among many other things, the dead land is the Waste Land, which draws in the Fisher King and the Grail Romances of the Medieval French tradition. Likewise, Walt Whitman's blooming lilacs from the dooryard cannot help but make their presence known, and we are immediately transported to the early development of the English literary tradition as well, with Chaucer's opening to "The Canterbury Tales":

> Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
> The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
> And bathed every veyne in swich licour
> Of which vertu engendred is the flour; (23)

Durrell demonstrates his familiarity with Eliot's allusiveness in this famous passage in his 1948 poem "Anniversary," which is dedicated "For T.S. Eliot" (*Collected Poems* 187). For

Durrell, Chaucer's root-piercing April showers explain the essence of Eliot's "Poetry, science of intimacies":

> In you his early roots drove through
> The barbarian compost of our English
> To sound new veins and marbled all his verses
> Through and through like old black ledgers
> Hedging in pain by form, and giving
> Quotations from the daily treaty poets make (*Collected* 187)

Durrell is pointing to the integration of tradition into the present via Eliot's allusion, which is itself based on Chaucer's allusion to Virgil, hence creating unity among fragments.

Durrell, however, cannot resist suggesting the 'unknown' in the second stanza. After pursuing Eliot's opening allusion in *The Waste Land*, Durrell comments:

> … yet these
> Alluding and delimiting can only mystify
> The singer and his mystery more, they do not chain. (*Collected* 187)

In this clause, the adjectival verbs "alluding" and "delimiting" are without a noun: alluding and delimiting 'poems' can only mystify? Alternatively a verb is missing from the previous clause. Nothing is doing or being the alluding and delimiting. In either case the subject of both potential readings is absent. Eliot, in this case, is removed from the scene in the same way he suggests that the objective correlative ("Hamlet" 100) displaces strong personal feeling, and as Cowley has noted, Eliot's objective correlative is also caught in an ambiguity over adjectives: "is it to be read as an adjective followed by a noun or a noun followed by an adjective" (320). Moreover, the allusions "do not chain"—they do not link "Time present and time past" (Eliot, *Four* 3). So, what *is* allusive and demarcated remains a gap in the text, and through this gap (not through allusion) the poet's promethean gift is unchained.

Durrell's gap in the poem nonetheless brings the reader's attention to the importance of allusion in Eliot's works, which Eliot notes: "I gave the reference in my notes in order to make the reader who recognized the allusion, know that I meant him to recognize it, and know that he would have missed the point if he did not recognize it" (*To Criticize* 128). This quintessentially Eliotic unification of "Time present and time past" (*Four* 1) is, however, radically challenged when these allusions encounter time past *within* time present: not a poetic heir but a poetic peer. There is a distinction, with regard to tradition and the canon, between Eliot's allusions to previous poetic traditions and his integration of popular song materials, though both function as allusions—one reinstates a canon and one challenges it, and we certainly do not encounter Homeric jazz rags in Eliot (he stays with the deus loci Shakespeare), although Durrell offers *Ulysses Come Back*, a comic jazz musical he composed and recorded during the political unrest in Paris in 1968.

Furthermore, the ties to Greek landscape further our sense of the Greek coextensive literary traditions through allusion, which in contrast to Eliot. Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* is very much about the Greek history of the city, with constant references to historical sites and with modern characters repeating (alluding) past events, much as the reader finds in Cavafy. This is, however, not only Seferis' 'Greek Style'—it also reflects the Freudian elements of the novel and Freud's own descriptions of another 'eternal city' as a metaphor for the psyche:

> nothing that has come into existence will have passed away and all earlier phases of development exist alongside the latter ones. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Caesars and the Septizonium of Septimus Severus

> would still be rising to their old height on the Palatine…. In the place occupied by the Palazzo Cafarelli would once more stand—without the Palazzo having to be removed—the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; and this not only in its latest shape, as the Romans of the Empire saw, but also in its earliest, when it still showed Etruscan forms and was ornamented with terra cotta antefixes…. And the observer would perhaps only have to change the direction of his glance or his position in order to call up the one view or the other. (Freud, *Civilization* 18)

This would seem an accurate reflection of the nature of tradition and allusion being set up by Durrell and Miller following on their interactions with Seferis and his introducing them to Cavafy's works. Miller's Paris is already one of overlapping memories, and Durrell seems to echo this approach in an often-cited passage in *The Alexandria Quartet*: "Our view of reality is conditioned by our position in space and time…. Every interpretation of reality is based upon a unique position. Two paces east or west and the whole picture is changed. Something of this order...." (210).

Such fusions of the modern and ancient, moreover, are what Seferis offers in his explorations of antiquity as already existing in lived space—the Athenian Acropolis is not fully ancient and not fully within a tradition when you live beneath it and hold is as a nationalist symbol for a modern country, a symbol holding together the city states it formerly distinguished itself from. This distinction colours the sense of tradition in Seferis' works. After dislodging Cavafy's historical allusions from a sense of tradition (in his comparison to Eliot), Seferis binds them to the lived space of the Alexandrian poet, Cavafy, where the ancient and modern literally overlap in the landscape: "the Greek tradition…. is not… an affair of isolated promontories, some great names, some illuminated texts" ("Cavafy and Eliot" 161). For Cavafy, the ancient and modern overlap in Alexander the Great's city, and Cleopatra's Anthony is as apt a reference as a modern adulterer walking the same streets, hearing the siren call of the city. Using Cavafy to demonstrate his revision of Eliot, Seferis lists the ancient and modern as coextensive, arguing the 'Greek style' is

> like what others of us see and feel… Greek folk songs, Aeschylus, Palamas, Solomos, Sikelianos, Calvos, Cavafy, the Parthenon, Homer, all living in a moment of time…. With this point of view Cavafy will not seem to us alien; rather we shall find him… becoming more and more closely united, more and more integrated with our living tradition. (161)

Moreover, Seferis' own view on tradition predates his awareness of Eliot, and it appears in 1920. Notably, this is contemporary with Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent," although Seferis' poetic and literary interests at the time were dedicated to Greek and French.

As Beaton outlines, Seferis gave his "programmatic view of poetry, tradition, and his own place in it" (*Seferis* 44) at this time in the early 1920s, and he quotes Seferis directly to make this point:

> "I could write in French and perhaps I shall but I don't want to, because I love Greece. [But] in Greek it's impossible for me to say what I want [to say]. Then in poetry, in art more generally, it's not enough that you write, you have to map out a tradition and base yourself on that…
>
> Art is a road made by artists. In Greece the artists are like telegraph poles along the side of the road, each one alone. All this needs to be looked at

> carefully. Which I plan to do, in all its facets. For the moment it's enough for me to feel and to make notes…" (*Seferis* 44)

Stabilizing this perspective, Beaton emphasizes "George's first decisive step along this road was taken on the evening of Friday 18 March 1921, when he delivered his lecture on Moréas[, a Greek author writing under a French name]" (*Seferis* 44). While these ideas predate any possible awareness of Eliot—and explicitly do so given Seferis' 'discovery' of Eliot's poetry just before December 1931 (Beaton, *Seferis* 107)—the shared French origins are to be expected given his influence by Jules Laforgue, whose influence was also acknowledged by Eliot (Beaton, *Seferis* 43). These fusions of past and present, through allusion and the historic nature of landscape, constitute the "Greek Style." This is precisely what Seferis seeks to articulate in his famous essay, "Cavafy and Eliot—A Comparison." Furthermore, Seferis' affinity for Cavafy, another notable pre-Eliot poet, is significant: "in just over three weeks, in October and November, [Seferis] copied out by hand all one hundred and fifty four poems of the Cavafy 'canon,' adding notes on each. At the same time he drafted a prologue for his planned [but never completed] book on Cavafy" (Beaton, *Seferis* 208). Cavafy bears a close connection to Seferis' sense of history, the 'canon' of Greek literature, and his ideas of Modernism, pointing to a more likely 'influence' than Eliot.

Seferis also had strong ties to Greek and French literary movements, even in the midst of his engagements with Anglo-American modernists. With regard to British Modernism, Seferis was still reading from the French perspective and cultural milieu, despite his fluent English:

> George's own drawing of a mermaid with a forked tail, the fins of the tail almost meeting above her head so as to form a circle. What is probably a

> prototype for this image appears on the improvised cover that he made, out of an old legal binder of Ioanna's, for his copy of the soft-bound French translation of Joyce's *Ulysses*[, and this image ties together] his parallel reading of the 'odysseys' of Homer and Joyce. (Beaton, *Seferis* 96)

These ties to Cavafy and the French movements, in the context of the profound effect Seferis had on both Durrell and Miller,[68] bear out in the two authors' struggles with their contemporary Anglo-American modernists.

Accessing Greek Modernism, with its affinities for Surrealism and viewing Antiquity as already within contemporary experience, Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet* (1957-1960) negotiates an alternative path to his British and American milieu, and it takes up a project very similar to the one Seferis articulates, though Durrell's work follows over a decade after Seferis' essay's first appearance as a lecture in 1946. Again returning to "The Waste Land," the "Unreal city" (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 31, 38-9) is a repeated trope in this quintessentially *city* novel by Durrell: Alexander the Great's city is the topos. However, Durrell's text does not pay *homage* to Eliot's series of Unreal cities in his 1922 poem. Consantine Cavafy is, instead, the city poet and the "old poet of the city" (*Quartet* 18) and it is his poem of the city that provides the centre around which the novel moves. Durrell also positions his work *contra* Liddell's *The Unreal City* and its Eliotic ties, a novel set in pre-war Alexandria published in 1952.

Nonetheless, the text is not without its allusions to Eliot, even though it was under his eyes that it was edited prior to publication by Faber & Faber, which turns our attention back to Durrell's letter about editors to Elizabeth Smart. Eliot was also Durrell's poetry editor. Before *The Alexandria Quartet* even begins, it is introduced by a Note and two epigrams, all of which are significant ciphers for the novel, and postcolonial critics have held firmly to the introductory note in particular: "The characters in this story, the first of a group, are all inventions together with the personality of the narrator, and bear no resemblance to living persons. Only the city is real" (14). This locates Alexandria, which is clearly not an accurate representation of the lived city of the 1930s, in a troubled position as "real" yet not an accurate reflection of colonial space.[69] Instead of discussing the postcolonial readings that have already been completed, for which I have already noted Manzalaoui's as exemplary, I argue the troubling word "real" marks this as a response to Eliot's "Unreal city" and a demarcation of Durrell's distinct intentions—the "reality" of Durrell's city is not at issue, and is frequently denied by Durrell in interviews, so it is the contradiction of Eliot's influence that stands out as important. Durrell's city is 'real' rather than 'unreal.' This is also borne out by the conclusion of the novel with Cavafy's poem "The City," which provides a narrative pattern that the Quartet as a whole works within. Durrell begins the next volume of the Quartet with a similar injunction, noting "The city, half-imagined (yet wholly real), begins and ends in us" (209) and only two pages later follows with the comment "An hour later, the *real* city appeared, swelling from a smudge to the size of its mirage" (211), in which "real" is emphasized with his own italics.

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[68] For further information on this influence, see Keeley's *Inventing Paradise: The Greek Journey 1937-47*, 10-11, 63, and 121; and the "Conclusion" in Roessel's *In Byron's Shadow: Modern Greece in the English and American Imagination*.

In place of Eliot's Unreal city, with its ties to Eliot's notion of Tradition, Durrell places Cavafy, and it is in response to Cavafy's poem "The City" to which the text repeatedly alludes. Apart from the directed references to the Real-ness of Durrell's Alexandria, which runs contrary to his comments in interviews and his admission to taking liberties with history (*Quartet* 395), we have a narrative structure that derives from the poem itself. Cavafy begins (in Durrell's translation of the Greek):

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[69] Also see John U. Peters' "Realizing the Unreal: Durrell's Alexandria Prefaces" (87-93).

> You tell yourself: I'll be gone
> To some other land to some other sea,
> To a city far lovelier than this
> Could ever have been or hoped to be— (*Quartet* 201)

The narrator of the novel, and the ostensive translator of the poem, has undertaken precisely this task by leaving Alexandria in order to write, but he too finds the same consequences as the poem:

> There's no new land my friend, no
> New sea; for the city will follow you,
> In *the same streets* you'll wander endlessly,
> The same mental suburbs slip from youth to age,
> In the same house go white at last—
> The city is a cage. (*Quartet* 201; emphasis mine)

These lines in Durrell's translation have their own influence as well, forming M.G. Vassanji's titular allusion in *No New Land*, which ties Toronto to Alexandria, but more to the point, they echo again in Durrell's novel when the Coptic Nessim asks his wife: "Why don't we leave this city, Justine, and seek an atmosphere less impregnated with the sense of deracination and failure?" (*Quartet* 147). This echo of the first lines of the poem is further compounded by the narrator's repeated attempts to escape the city:

> With the posting of this letter of acceptance [of a teaching job in Upper Egypt] a new period will be initiated, for it marks *my separation from the city* in which so much has happened to me, so much of momentous importance: *so much that has aged me.... The same streets* and squares will *burn in my imagination* as the Pharos burns in history. Particular rooms in which I have made love, particular café tables where the pressure of fingers upon a wrist held me spellbound, feeling through the hot pavements the rhythms of Alexandria. (*Quartet* 182)

All of this returns the reader's eye to the poem's declaration that:

> The city is a cage.
> No other places, always this
> Your earthly landfall, and no ship exists
> To take you from yourself. (*Quartet* 201)

Moreover, while Cavafy's city is tied to the same historic figures who walked its ancient streets, much as Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" is tied to Florence even in the midst of its allusions to Dante, this blurring of past and present is not a creation of a canon in the same sense as it was for Eliot, and this was Seferis' contention in his comparison of Eliot to Cavafy, which emphatically carries over into Durrell's work. Just as in Freud's Rome, Durrell's and Miller's locales allow an overlap that is akin to that which Seferis traces in Cavafy: not a canon of order and sequence, with mutual influence and transformation of the personal to the literary, but instead a past that is contemporary with the present, where forebears' footsteps echo on the same streets and walkways.

Furthermore, Durrell seems to be specifically working against Eliot's influence in this instance. This is much like the tension in *The Black Book* (1939), where two narrative voices struggle for supremacy: the London-based Classicist who seems to reflect Eliot to some degree, and the Corfu-based youth who rejects the 'mummy wrappings' of England (Pudding island). This is also akin to Miller's surrealist recontextualizing of Joyce in *Tropic of Cancer*. In Durrell's translation of Cavafy's "The City," the land of decay that comprises the city—translated as "wasteland" in most versions (μαρασμό in the original)—is re-created by Durrell as "purlieus of the common mind" (*Quartet* 201). This places the decaying land of the city in a different context. Durrell's translation reads: 'How long, how long must I be here / Confined among the dreary purlieus of the common mind? Wherever now I look / Black ruins of my life rise into view." (*Quartet* 201) as opposed to the original "O νους μου ως πότε μες στον μαρασμό αυτόν θα μένει. / Oπου το μάτι μου γυρίσω, όπου κι αν δω / ερείπια μαύρα της ζωής μου βλέπω εδώ" (Cavafy 98). Moreover, Durrell's translation runs for twenty-four lines while the original is composed of only sixteen. These revisions to the poem significantly shift attention away from any potential tie to Eliot and instead keep attention on Cavafy's "waste land feel," to use Seferis' terms, aligning Durrell quite emphatically with the movements within Greek Modernism.

The original poem and Durrell's translation are significantly different, as he has even mentioned in his public readings of the text. For a closer exploration of the distinctions, see Hirst's "'The old poet of the city': Cavafy in Darley's Alexandria," which takes a scholar of Modern Greek's viewpoint on the importance of Cavafy's work to Durrell's novel, as well as Durrell's creative translation of the poem. This point is reinforced by Raizis in "Lawrence Durrell and the Greek Poets: A Contribution to Cultural History" and Valaoritis in

"Remembering the Poets: Translating Seferis with Durrell and Bernard Spencer," which recounts Valaoritis' personal interactions with Durrell and Durrell's translations.

As Seferis notes, of the "Greek Style" and Cavafy's exemplification of it, Cavafy's "Those Who Fought for the Achaean League" shows the elision of history, tradition, and contemporary experience that remain outside a formalized canon, a canon that is important through tradition.[70] Instead, Cavafy's emphasis is on a tradition rooted deeply in nationalism and lived space. Seferis quotes the poem for his example:

> Valiant are those who fought and fell in glory;
> Fearless of those who were everywhere victorious.
> If Diaios and Critolaus were at fault, you are blameless.
> When the Greeks want to boast,
> "Our nation turns out such men as these," they will say
> of you. So marvelous will be your praise—
>
> Written in Alexandria by an Achaean;
> In the seventh year of Ptolemy Lathyrus. (Seferis 126)

Seferis then immediately notes what appears to be an affinity with Eliot's notion of Classicism:

> [These lines] made me reflect upon the remarkable unity of the Greek Anthology, which, as has been observed, contains poems written over a period of about a thousand years and yet forms a whole, the newer poems merely

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[70] One could argue that the search for or creation of origins is the most typically 'Modern' element among the Modernists, and that Tradition falls in this trend; however, even in the play with etymologies, etymology itself shows this very old tendency. As a search for the "true word," this search for origins seems to be as old as literature itself.

> adding something of their own to the procession of the older ones. And so, I thought, after a chasm of so many years, here comes Cavafy to add his stone to the great building. (126)

This does not vary far from the established Modernist notions of Classicism set out by Eliot and instituted in his editing of *The Criterion*, though it could also be read as allowing for a mutual influence in line with Eliot's sense of Tradition. However, Seferis admits to being puzzled over "the point of this tail-piece which merely seemed to get in the way: "Written in Alexandria by an Achaean, / In the seventh year of Ptolemy Lathyrus" (126) until

> suddenly and for the first time, I appreciated that the poem was written in 1922, on the eve of the catastrophe in Asia Minor [the massacre at Smyrna]; and almost without thinking I reread these lines as:
>
> Written in Alexandria by an Achaean,
> The year that our race was destroyed. (127)

This then places Cavafy, the Smyrna-born Greek living in the now-Arab city of Alexandria, in a far different position from contributing his "stone" to the literary canon where he ostensibly struggles under in the *agon* of the Bloomian *ephebe* and so forth—instead, this is an intensely politicized sense of ethnicity and nationalism caught in a poem of exile where an affinity between emotional states is recognized as overlapping in the same space and under related circumstance, but separated by millennia. This overlapping of space in the historic city, where history rewrites itself like a palimpsest, is precisely the figuration Durrell draws from Cavafy and that the reader finds in Greek Modernism as a whole, and that Durrell and Miller carry across from their Greek interactions back to Anglo-American Modernism.

Perhaps most clearly, Durrell describes precisely this situation during his exile from Greece in Egypt during World War II. In an unpublished letter to Miller he makes this distinction clear and gives an example of it:

> Elie Papadimitriou… has only come in to her own as a poetess since the flight into Egypt, for her great poem "Anatolia" she brought with her in manuscript ; we found her living in a tiny shuttered room of the Luna Park refugee hotel , lying on a bed and picking at portions of the text with a pencil . "Anatolia" was first published in Cairo , and so far the provincial Greeks here are quite unaware that a great literary event has taken place . The poem is too unpretentious and written in a language studiously unliterary to attract the local literary sets who are only just discovering Kavaphis [Cavafy]. "Anatolia" is a shadow-play about the Asia Minor disaster, and there is full tranlation [sic] of it practically finished... All the bitterness of exile from Athens, the tragedy being enacted in Greece, and the impotence of those who can merely look on a suffer , find reflections in the recitatives of this marvellous [sic] poem which is one of the things we shall bear back to the Acropolis in triumph when the war ends . Elie Papadimitriou is in Palestine at the moment of writing (Durrell, "/a letter" 2)

Of particular note is the parallel to Cavafy via the massacre at Smyrna (the Asia Minor disaster of 1922), so that a poem recounting this past event is taken up as an expression of a current "bitterness of exile." The exile from Smyrna becomes the exile from Athens, and the reader is meant to "find reflections in the recitatives," just as in Cavafy's recasting of the ancient Archaeen League through the addenda "Written in Alexandria by an Achaean, / In the seventh year of Ptolemy Lathyrus" (126). The past is not a catalyst for the artist's personal experiences to be transformed into poetry—instead, the past forms a continuity. Time does not pass; it accumulates, and the present can be expressed through it while allowing a gap in the expressions where the reader is forced to rely on his or her own complex interpretive resources.

Furthermore, reading Seferis' essay on Eliot and Cavafy, Kolokotroni[71] and Taxidou point out a crucial distinction. Seferis describes this sense of tradition in the Greek Style by noting that Cavafy's "poems were 'pedestals.... from which the statues are missing...'. Cavafy's poems often show the emotion we would have from a statue that is no longer there – which was there, which we saw and which has now been removed.... The catastrophe is that missing statue" (Seferis 127). Kolokotroni and Taxidou expand on Seferis by noting:

> Seferis's reading suggests that Cavafy's poetry is haunted by absences which are not lamented in an elegiac way but are rather placed and implicated in a historical dynamic which is determined by ruptures rather than continuities. This is not a cyclical dynamic, however, not comparable, that is, to Yeats's gyres; neither does it imply the coincidence of all time put forward by Eliot in *Four Quartets*. Cavafy's historical poetic mode does not aim at recuperation; the evocation of presences on the verge of extinction partakes, we would argue, of that melancholy-valiant sense which confronts the past without illusions. ("Modernism and Hellenism" 20)

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[71] This is the same Vassiliki Kolocotroni (note the variant spelling of Kolokotroni) who was the primary editor of the anthology, *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources Documents*. Her perspective as a Greek Modernism scholar colours her viewpoint on the dominance of certain models of Modernism (Kolocotroni, *Modernism* xvii).

Kolokotroni and Taxidou's position is a strong one here, and the melancholy-valiant sense of the past seems akin to the accumulation of time that allows Cavafy to see the past *in* the present, to stumble on the ancient in the modern and vice versa. It is further reinforced by Seferis' established influence on both Durrell and Miller, which supports my reading of Durrell's and Miller's representations of politicized historical landscapes. This is especially true given how such sites are typically marked in both authors' works by a significant absence that draws attention to itself, a seemingly allusive absence that is "placed and implicated in a historical dynamic" (20).

As with Friedman's contention that the meanings of Modernism are unstable, and in line with Kolokotroni's contention that "Modernism is not a movement. It is a term that masks conflict and upheaval and any number of contradictory positions" (vvii), the primary exemplars of Modernism in Greece demonstrate a significant difference from Eliot on the key issue of allusion, and Durrell and Miller mirror this split. With the missing element and the immediacy of the past's continued presence in the present, Durrell and Miller turn attention to the gap, the 'unknown,' and in this way develop an alternative to the mainstream of the Anglo-American traditions their works initially arose from. This indicates how Greek Modernism holds a key position of influence with regard to these two authors, Durrell and Miller, being both a development from Western European Modernisms, including the hegemonic form, and as an origin for these traditions that necessitates their revision.

THE UNKNOWN SELF: UNRESOLVED AMBIGUITY AND CHARACTER

> "Everything external is but a reflection projected by the mind machine" .... "the woman I fell upon, clawed, bit, suffocated with unknown kisses, the woman who had been Mara and was now Mona, who had been and would be other names, other persons, other assemblages of appendages, was no more accessible, penetrable, than a cool statue in a forgotten garden of a lost continent." (Miller, *Sexus* 209; 210)

> "Miller's work has no 'characters', there are only savage charcoal cartoons of human beings: it has no time-springing—it is written in a perpetual historic present: it has no sequence, location, process..." (Durrell, "Studies" 60; ellipsis original)

i. Character in *The Rosy Crucifixion*

The nature of character is another exploration of the 'unknown' for Durrell and Miller, perhaps their most effective. Characters typically stand in as fictional representations of those equally intangible selves that stand outside of the text, and the trends surrounding the ambiguity of character identities reflect those of identity in general.[72] The supposed selves of characters that Miller and Durrell create in their works are a primary instance of their notion of the 'unknown.' Moreover, just as their characters are malleable, fluid, and continually revised, often built around a gap where some stable core to the Self might be supposed to exist, so too are the notions of selfhood in the texts.

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[72] For an overview of theories of literary character in line with Durrell and Miller, see William Godshalk's "Shakespeare and the Problem of Literary Character" (n.pag)—Godshalk is also an established scholar on Durrell's works. Also see Schneider's "Toward a Cognitive Theory of Literary Character" (607-40), in which

As Miller states with regard to Mara, who had been Mona in *Tropic of Cancer*, but becomes both Mona and Mara in *The Rosy Crucifixion*, she "had *been* and would *be* other names" (*Sexus* 210; emphasis mine). His description of her will change, and with it so will her character in the novel, which leaves any presumed essential or knowable identity unfixed for the reader, and by extension, general notions of identity are likewise destabilized into an unknowable collection of loose associations or trends that cannot be rooted in any fixed or essential form. All of this, of course, is appropriate for fiction (and perhaps is even necessary by definition), even if it is contrary to the general interpretive habits of most readers. All of the ambiguities and uncertainties about her character, even something as simple as her two potential names, only serve to point the reader toward an unresolvable, yet necessary, tension. The ambiguous is displaced by the unknowable, and rather than prompting a resolution, in its tension, the ambiguity points to the limitations of what can be known. The reader builds a notion of the character that is not text-imminent, only to have it repeatedly challenged by the text, which returns attention to these constructions.

Moreover, rather than having an ambiguous and even unresolved either/or proposition (Mona *or* Mara), the reader is given an uncollapsed duality, such that the two names point to a totality or container that remains undescribed and unknown. Even if that container is a

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he pursues a reader-oriented revision of Forster's famous flat versus round character distinction: he "defines flat characters as those who 'are easily recognized,' whereas round characters are 'capable of surprising' (*Aspects of the Novel* 74, 81); for the experience of recognition and surprise, the reader must previously have established mental representations and expectations" (607).

fiction rather than the presumed 'real' personality interpretively postulated by the reader, the notion of its wholeness within fiction works in the same manner: containing conflicting dual properties in the text that are compiled under two different names. Authentic identities remain a gap, aporetic. This leaves the reader in the position of resolving the either/or ambiguity, only to return to this moment of resolution in order to have this resolution destabilized and contradicted. For instance, to continue using Mona/Mara as an instance of the ambiguous or unknown Miller claims "Everybody took Mona and Rebecca for sisters" (*Sexus* 342), even though Rebecca seems to wear her family origins on her sleeve, so to speak, while Mona is unidentifiable. Miller uses three full paragraphs to trace Rebecca's heritage, yet when he turns to Mona, her apparent double, he claims "it was impossible to guess what her origins were.... She could have passed for a Portugese, a Basque, a Roumanian Gypsy, a Hungarian, a Georgian, anything she chose to make you believe" (342). This distinction is followed by an instance of Empson's seventh type of ambiguity (the primary sense of ambiguity that turns Miller's and Durrell's readers toward the 'unknown'), such that Mona's "English was impeccable and, to most observers, without the slightest trace of accent. She might have been born anywhere" (343). The insinuation is that her origins should surface in an accent, yet "her English [is] impeccable" (343), and Miller never actually claims that she previously had an accent or came from any of the racial, national, or ethnic groups he lists.

The distinction is palpable, but the reader is left to find a suitable (though temporary) resolution to this moment where the text does not mean what is says. The suggestions are also contradictory. Mona is not like Rebecca, who is Jewish and has a complex origin, yet Mona's lack of an accent makes the narrator believe "the English she spoke was obviously an

English she had mastered in order to frustrate all such inquiries as relate to origins and antecedents" (343). She both must have an ethnicity or racial origin outside of the visible (and "origins" seem to imply something Other), yet her accent denies this possibility, and Miller gives a list of what she "could have passed for" (342), which implies she belongs to none of these groups. This is all to say that whatever Mona/Mara *is*. The adjective for her identity is necessarily unknowable, because any identifier that could be determined would necessarily contradict the indeterminacy that characterizes her attributes. Miller perambulates palpably around this missing adjective, making the gap as noticeable as any Mycenaen cave. All potentialities for Mona/Mara are contradicted, leaving her in a negative position with only the attributes the readers choose to ascribe as their own familiarities.

This same difficulty in placing Mona appears more explicitly in one of her erotic tales, probably the most pornographic in the *Sexus*, where she is raped in a surreal car drive by a man who seems inhuman. Her tale is fanciful and the narrating Val[73] clearly does not believe her story, with its lapses and contradictions, which serves the primary purpose of explaining how she had contracted an indeterminate venereal disease. What is ambiguous (apart from the relative truth or falsity of the story in the context of the novel) is the narrative voice that tells this particular story to the reader. Sometimes it is narrated by Mona in dialogue, noted by the use of quotations marks around her comments, but at selected moment it lapses into the discursive voice of the narrator himself, ventriloquising Mona (*Sexus* 352). At still others, it becomes free, indirect discourse, which blurs the narrator, Mona, and the reader's voice.

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[73] While Miller does not create a narrator with the name 'Henry Miller' in this instance, he is only using his middle name, so difficulties with critics and biographers who insist on the biographical potential for the novel, as opposed to his irony and creation of a narrator distinct from the author, are still quite prevalent in the scholarship.

Naturally, this supports Kate Millet's reading that Miller's texts are "a compendium of American sexual neuroses" (295) as projected by Miller onto his narrators. Nonetheless, even if Mona's experiences (and potentially even her identity in the text) are nothing more than the ventriloquised voice for the narrator's own fantasies (the narrator and the authorial Miller are quite distinct here), this implicates the reader's anticipations, the readers who must be likewise finding what he or she expected from a Miller novel: Mona, as a character, embroiled in pornographic adventures. These adventures reflect the expectations of the reader as much as they do the fantasies of the narrative voice. Apart from Miller's potential irony, this also matches his notion of reflection in "Obscenity and the Law of Reflection" (175-189). In essence, Miller argues that obscenity resides largely in the reader's mind, and hence is a projection of the reader that the text only mirrors: "by a law of reflection in nature, everyone is the performer of acts similar to those he attributes to others….[, as in] Romans xiv:14" (177). Whether or not we accept Miller's law, his suggestion that the reader is implicated is supported by the shifts in discourse in Mona's story, its internal contradictions, and its 'holes in the plot,' all of which rely on the reader's additions or resolutions. This ultimately leaves 'Mona' as an absence in the text, caught between two mutually necessary yet contradictory descriptions: victim and villain. The reader is again caught in an act of resolution.

Likewise, when contemplating Mona, the narrator muses that "Everything external is but a reflection projected by the mind machine" (*Sexus* 209), and in this statement, Miller nicely avoids the typical suppositions that are applied to his works: i.e., that they are more self-exploration than they are realistic depiction. This supposition also assumes that the text strives for autobiographical veracity, rather than working as fiction. With regard to the

Mona/Mara, who is external to the narrator of the text (and the narrator is also a character not to be confused with the author), it is natural to suggest that she is a reflection of Miller's self-exploration via his semi-autobiographical writings. This is not the case. Miller, via his narrator, is more specific in arguing that "Everything external" (i.e. Mona/Mara, in her subsequent description external to the narrator's frame), is a reflection of "the mind machine." This machine projects itself outward via the act of interpretation, understanding, and knowing (*Sexus* 210): in other words, it is Miller's law of reflection (or a solipsism if we limit knowledge to the contents created by a reader's interpretations). This is to say, there is no character, Self, or identity involved in the process Miller outlines.

However, on the next page of the novel the narrator attempts to access some essential identity for the woman he ravishes, but there is only the machinery of the mind at work, projecting its workings into a series of reflections that then constitute the image of selfhood. In other words, while the descriptions of contradictory characters in the novel are undercut as projections, they offer no insight into the character (or Self) of the projector—these are mechanical projections of a machine's cogs, stock desires, and not any essential identity. Even the sex act can take on these traits, being "a machine *whose* cogs have slipped…., inhuman" (*Tropic of Cancer* 141; emphasis mine). "Whose" shows the machine is a person, yet the gap where identity should stand is vacant, inhuman. To add to this complexity, Miller is far from denying any other form of identity, and even goes so far as to claim "If the self were not imperishable, the 'I' I write about would have been destroyed long ago" (*Tropic of Capricorn* 13), which suggests to the reader that any other underlying identity that is not a false insinuation of "the mind machine" must lie somewhere other than where it is typically sought.

Furthermore, Mona/Mara (which may be just as aptly substituted with *maja*) is not penetrable or knowable for the narrator, who may nonetheless inscribe things on her surface, and his inscriptions are likewise derived from further machinations of "the mind machine" (*Sexus* 210) that is somehow distinct from himself. More to the point, her impenetrability is conjoined in Miller's description with her fluid character identity—she "had been and would be other names, other persons, other assemblages of appendages, was no more accessible, penetrable, than a cool statue in a forgotten garden of a lost continent" (*Sexus* 210). This description avoids mentioning any primary 'selves' and instead focuses on the 'external' rather than 'internal' traits of an identity that are more easily placed on passports, driver's licenses, and such: i.e. her names and her physical body. Nonetheless, Miller shows the lie in such means to identification by granting her an indeterminate number of names and physical features that belie these visible characteristics. Identity does not reside there, or at least not in an unambiguous way. She is also granted an interiority that is both inaccessible and potentially without substance, existing neither of herself nor of the voice that creates her, but rather as the work of "the mind machine" (210).

All of these problems surrounding identity and notions of the Self, which has become somehow indeterminate and unknowable, make Miller's long-term interest in Friedrich Nietzsche a natural direction for Miller scholarship. What is crucial about issues of the Self is his abiding reading of Nietzsche—as Nandyal argues:

> Of the many writers whose names Miller encountered during the days of young manhood, Nietzsche must have been the most important, for, Miller wrote his first essay on the subject of Nietzsche's *Antichrist* while working in his father's tailor shop. (Nandyal 13)

Mary Dearborn likewise corroborates this biographical detail, writing: "During slack hours at the tailor shop, he wrote a long essay on Nietzsche's *Antichrist*" (*Happiest Man* 55). Furthermore, during the time when Miller was finishing *Nexus*, he tells Durrell that he is "Rereading... Nietzsche" (Durrell, *Durrell-Miller Letters* 344), and ten years earlier, in 1949, he corrects Durrell's "Studies in Genius: Henry Miller" by noting: "The great influenc[e] w[as] Nietzsche" (Durrell, *Durrell-Miller Letters* 229).

These echoes continue into the novels and include Nietzsche's statement that "God degenerated to the *contradiction of life*, instead of being its transfiguration and eternal *Yes*!" (Nietzsche, "The Antichrist" 140). The will to power is "degenerated" into a submission to death and "the next world" (140), which finds its echo in Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn* (it is worth quoting at length here to emphasize the importance of this allusion):

> Death is wonderful too—*after life*. Only one like myself who has opened his mouth and spoken, only one who has said Yes, Yes, Yes, and again Yes! can open wide his arms to death and know no fear. Death as a reward, yes! Death as a result of fulfillment, yes! Death as a crown and shield, yes! But not death from the roots, isolating men, making them bitter and fearful and lonely, giving them fruitless energy, filling them with a will which can only say No! The first word any man writes when he has found himself, his own rhythm, which is the life rhythm, is Yes! Everything he writes thereafter is Yes, Yes, Yes—Yes in a thousand million ways. No dynamo, no matter how huge—not even a dynamo of a hundred million dead souls—can combat one man saying Yes! (290; underlining mine)

Such textual echoes, sharing both a philosophic sentiment and its expression through "Yes," continue. This passage also illuminates Miller's difference from the psychoanalytic mainstream that has commented on his works. In Seminar VII, Jacques Lacan comments on Miller twice, both times in the context of transgressive desire, masochism, *jouissance*, and the ultimately the death drive (Lacan, *Ethics* 200, 233). However, as I have argued elsewhere, Lacan's articulation of these late Freudian notions is incongruous in the context of Miller's allusions to Otto Rank[74], who broke with Freud over the issues of anxiety and in line with his sympathies for Nietzsche, his revision of anxiety having ultimately led to the now-prominent paradigm in cultural psychology, Terror Management Theory[75].

Terror Management Theory is an empirical approach to the effects of one's awareness of mortality, which range from an increased need for self-esteem through social belonging, increased derogation of perceived difference, increased liking for perceived sameness, and increased worldview defense. It is currently supported by hundreds of empiric studies conducted internationally across different religious, ethnic, and cultural groups. The central postulation is that the instinct for self-preservation goes through a series of symbolic developments, such that symbolic self-preservation results in social effects, even involving self-destructive behaviour as a symbolic form of self-preservation[76]. In this paradigm, and in Miller's novels, the existential foreknowledge of one's own mortality provokes anxiety. This prompts symbolization, projection, and identification through behaviours that include violence, derogation, and increased liking of sameness, especially with regard to social groupings.

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[74] See my "'Convinced of the dead certainty of death'" (106-118), in which I outline the affinities between Miller's discussions of death and the development of Terror Management Theory from Otto Rank's revisions of psychoanalytic approaches to anxiety. "In January 1933, Miller got up the courage to write Rank, and he finally saw him one afternoon in March" (Liebermann, 328), after which Rankian themes and approaches became more pronounced in his works, such as birth, the artist, and myth-oriented approaches to psychological conflicts. Durrell likewise received a copy of Rank's *Art and Artist* from Anais Nin as a birthday present.

[75] It is also notable that Durrell overtly rejected Lacan ("Endpapers & Inklings" 88-95) while developing an interest in other thinkers in the same circle (Barthes, Foucault, and Sartre).

[76] For a good overview of this paradigm, see Greenberg's "The Causes and Consequences of a Need For Self-Esteem: A Terror Management Theory" (189-212).

In the Terror Management Theory (TMT) paradigm, Florian articulates some of the distinctions this leads to:

> humans, like other living beings, are driven by a self-preservation instinct. However, unlike other organisms, humans are self-conscious and are aware of their own existence. One consequence of this elevated self-awareness is the comprehension of the inevitability of their ultimate death.... [T]his inner yearning for life coupled with the painful realization that one must eventually die, places humans in an impossible paradox. (527)

As its next innovation, TMT posits an increased investment in distal defenses against the terror and foreknowledge of mortality. Goldenberg succinctly defines these notions:

> We refer to these threat-focused defenses as proximal defenses because they bear a close logical relation to the problem of death [i.e., "I will quit smoking because cancer is a threat," "I will kill the person who is threatening me," or "I exercise, so I don't need to worry about cancer"]. In contrast, we refer to the terror management defenses of self-esteem and faith in one's worldview as distal defenses because their connection to the problem of death is more remote and less rational. (202; examples mine)

Examples of distal defenses would include, "I will go to church more," "I will defend my country" or "I have a sculpted and muscular physique," among others. Moreover, proximal defenses "are employed when thoughts of death are in current focal attention, [while] distal defenses... are employed when the problem of death is on the fringes of consciousness" (202). Empiric studies measure this indirectly via artificially heightening mortality salience against controls such as heightened fear (often via the suggestion or viewing of extreme dental pain and such, as opposed to the suggestion or viewing of death in a self-reflective context).

These TMT studies reveal a unique increase in the derogation of perceived difference and avoidance of self-reflection following heightened mortality salience (the awareness of one's inevitable death), as opposed to other fearful or traumatic states. Moreover, in tandem with this increased derogation of perceived difference comes an increased tendency toward stereotypic thinking and preferences for stereotype-confirming individuals, which would obviously enhance the construction of difference. With this heightened sense of death, not only cultural symbolic systems act as distal defenses (heightened identification with the nation or culture and derogation of difference, likely constructed via stereotypes), but so too does the major field of one's contribution to the transcendence system (transcendence of self via identification), which functions far more pervasively.

In this context, a transcendence system is the symbolic network that allows for the transcendence of self via identification, or symbolic immortality through belonging to another group. In this sense, "one is [symbolically] a valuable participant in a meaningful and eternal reality.... According to TMT, cultural worldviews and self-esteem provide an anxiety buffer" (Goldenberg 201). For example, one's job or research, if it is a part of self-identity, is a greater part of the anxiety buffer against the death-fear than one's nationality, and it is defended more vehemently. Vice versa, for someone who self-identifies more strongly via his or her nationality, this reverses.

In addition, Arndt has recently shown that while "mortality salience leads to increased identification with one's in-group...., it reduces such identifications when negative information or stereotypes about one's group are salient" (28). Given Schimel's demonstration that mortality salience increases the tendency toward stereotypic thinking, this conservation of self-esteem becomes doubly telling, especially since the stereotype threats used by Arndt were gender and race-based (women and Hispanics). In this manner, self-esteem is oxymoronically tied to social belonging and one's perception of self in a social framework. In other words, self-esteem is based on self-value as a meaningful participant in a group. This belonging standardizes the self and hence challenges notions of individuality and uniqueness that are commonly included under the umbrella of concepts of selfhood.

Miller's exploration of this nexus in his fiction troubles the cultural systems of false symbolizations in which such life-limiting restrictions function, while the text nonetheless concedes the comfort that one's submission to such systems gives (even if such comfort is bought with potentially destructive attachments). Most notably, Terror Management is not compatible with Freudian notions of the Death Drive, and its intellectual origins can be traced to the breaks in the psychoanalytic community that arose as Freud's late ideas became solidified. Miller's and Durrell's affinities here point to the difficulties in using Freud and Lacan to read their works. As well, TMT's relative disinterest in making the unconscious conscious (contra Freud) is reflected in Durrell and Miller.

In contrast to TMT, while discussing Sade and *jouissance*, Lacan notes Miller twice: "at a time when Henry Miller's stories make us tremble, who would dare rival the licentiousness of Sade?" and again when discussing the barrier and beyond "witness for example the revels to be found in the works of the not untalented author of *Sexus*, *Plexus* and

Nexus" (200, 203). The oddity here is that Lacan invokes Miller to work as an example of a critical paradigm even though Miller's works refute it through allusions to its competitors

Adrian Dannatt continues Lacan's reading and claims

> Miller describes this singular, pointless obsession [of *jouissance*] in Tropic of Cancer; 'There's just a crack there between the legs and you get all steamed up about it - you don't even look at it half the time... It's an illusion! You get all burned up about nothing... It's so absolutely meaningless that it fascinated me'" (n.pag).

She goes on to argue from Miller that "In this sense 'the crack' mimics the term *jouissance*, which may literally mean 'orgasm' but which not even the greatest orgasm could actually embody, for *jouissance* is the orgasm beyond orgasm, it is the goal every orgasm strives towards but can never quite achieve" (n.pag). While Miller is explicit about the symbolic element of sex, as I outline later in the section "Queer(ing) Miller," the death drive implicit in her reading is refuted by Miller through his theoretical alignments, and Dannatt would find more profit in the phrase that concludes her passage from Miller: "All that mystery about sex and then you discover that it's nothing — just a blank" (n.pag; quoting Miller 139). Miller's continuation emphasizes this blank more than any other feature: "But there's nothing there… nothing at all" (139; ellipsis original).

In contrast to these readings, Miller's works reflect his interest in Rank's rebuttal to the death drive[77] through an extension of the pleasure principle—the destructive repetition compulsion, for Rank (and allusively in Miller and Durrell) is instead seen as a symbolic mastery. As Judith Butler argues, "We might well concur with Freud that there is a significant connection between a desire for death and the sadistic effort to master or injure another human being, but we might remain skeptical with regard to the ontological primacy attributed to the death instincts" (268). This skepticism is particularly strong when "a desire for death and the sadistic effort to master or injure another human being" reflects the symbolic overcoming of death[78].

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[77] For a detailed discussion of the role of death in Miller's works, see my "'Convinced of the dead certainty of death': Henry Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn* and the Nexus of Fear and Violence" (106-118).

Outlining the Reality Principle, following on the repetition compulsion of war veterans, Freud first describes the child who throws away his own toys as exemplifying delayed gratification rather than a denial of the pleasure principle, and he follows this with the more problematic tendency to repeat for the sake of agency or willing control, such that "each fresh repetition seems to strengthen the mastery they are in search of" ("Beyond" 274; emphasis mine). Neither situation denies the primacy of the pleasure principle. The child has the gratification of bringing back his toys, which can only be accomplished by first making them go away. Alternatively in the context of his separation from his mother, the child uses the 'gone' toys as a way of mastering this separation by willing it in the Nietzschean sense. Just as she may leave him, he may have power by making his toys (projections of his mother) go away (and return via the umbilical string), hence moving from a passive to an active role, even if unpleasure is inevitably involved in both cases; "in that case it would have a defiant meaning: 'All right, then, go away! I don't need you. I'm sending you away myself'" (Freud, "Beyond" 247; emphasis mine). Ernst is seeking pleasure (symbolic pleasure) through unpleasure, such that the pleasure principle is retained and the willful authority of the ego is given symbolic prominence through a symbolic act.

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[78] For a reading of precisely this scenario in Durrell's works, see my ""'Terror Management Theory and Literature" (212-224) and "The Phenomenology of Death: Considering Otto Rank, Ernest Becker and Herbert Marcuse in Lawrence Durrell's *Avignon Quintet*" (13-38), as well as a discussion of Durrell's ironic use of self-destruction to undermine Gnostic readings of his last novel series (Gifford and Osadetz 1-8).

The similarity of this rereading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* to Otto Rank's central challenge to Freudian psychology is not lost to Robert Kramer. He asks, "Was Ernst turning passive into active with this play? Mimicking an instinctual renunciation? Becoming a conscious subject—a subject of psychoanalytic research?" (227). This, of course, repudiates Lacan's seminal statement

> To say that it is simply a function for the subject of instituting himself in a function of mastery is idiotic.... contrary to the whole phenomenology of *Daseinanalysis* [Existential Analysis], there is no *Dasein* with the *fort*. That is to say, there is no choice. If the young subject can practice this game of *fort-da*, it is precisely because he does not practice it at all" (*Four Fundamental* 239).[79]

In this alternatively scenario, drawn from Rank's break with Freud over anxiety, the self-destructive repetition is not tied to a reality principle or death drive (which ties to Lacan's *jouissance*), but is instead prompted by symbolic self-preservation and the pleasure principle.[80] For these reasons, I do not pursue a psychoanalytic reading of Miller or Durrell—the allusions to psychoanalysis seem more apt for approaching their works than a psychoanalytic analysis *per se*, nor are their works particularly apt for exemplifying psychoanalytic ideas since their references are to competing models of interpretation. Durrell, in particular, muddies the water by using psychoanalytic case studies as fodder for plot elements, though most typically from unorthodox analysts[81]. This is, in large part for both authors, due to their affinities for Otto Rank, who broke from Freud on the basis of those areas where his thinking was most influenced by Nietzsche, who we also find as a seminal figure for Durrell and Miller.

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[79] For a more detailed discussion of the distinctions between Rank's work through its development into the current Terror Management paradigm in contrast to Lacan and Zizek's development of Freud's suggestion of the Death Drive, see my "What Is Zizek So Afraid Of?" (n.pag) and "Annaud's Enemy at the Gates: 'Die Schreckenspforten, die Not und Tod'" (59-81).

[80] For a succinct, empirical approach to the relationship between reminders of mortality and an *increase* in life-threatening behaviour based on symbolic self-preservation, see Orit Taubman Ben-Ari's "The Effect of Reminders of Death on Reckless Driving: A Terror Management Perspective" (196-199).

As an extended example of how Durrell's interest in unorthodox analysts and his use of psychoanalytic case histories as fodder for a plot, I will use the otherwise confusing problem of noses in *The Alexandria Quartet*. Dr. Amaril goes through a protracted love affair with Semira, a woman whom he meets during carnival who has no nose, but whom he assists through plastic surgery (*Alexandria* 511-516). Apart from the obviously playful echo of *Tristram Shandy*, which would read Semira through a phallic lack, the source for this rather odd series of significant scenes has eluded scholars, and the most plausible solution is Georg Groddeck's *The Unknown Self.* Groddeck's influences on Durrell's works, as a source for rich allusions and striking images, has already been firmly established by Richard Pine (*Lawrence Durrell: The Mindscape* 121-123, 144, and 256), Soad Sohby ("Alexandria" 26-39), MacNiven (*Lawrence Durrell: A Biography* 298-99), Bowker (*Through* 163), and Durrell's own "Studies in Genius VI: Groddeck" (384-403). I have also already discussed the origins of Freud's notion of the Id in Groddeck's It.

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[81] For instance, see my note on Durrell's use of Groddeck's discussion of noses, "Noses in the *Alexandria Quartet*" (2-4) or Durrell's marginalia in the psychoanalytic books held in the Bibliothèque Lawrence Durrell at the Université de Paris X: Ernest Jones' *Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis*, Wilhelm Stekel's *Conditions of Nervous Anxiety and Their Treatment*, Morton Prince's *The Dissociation of a Personality*, Nandor Fodor's *New Approaches to Dream Interpretation*, Bertram D. Lewin's *The Psychoanalysis of Elation*, and Phyllis Greenacre's *Trauma, Growth, And Personality*.

Groddeck himself has been mostly forgotten amongst the early psychoanalysts. In his letter to Durrell, Carl Jung describes Groddeck as

> a doctor in Baden-Baden or Freiburg i.E. [sic] I have seen him once personally. He was a man of abject ugliness and a peculiar, not altogether sympathetic, originality of mind, the brand of which was typically German…. such was his originality : a bit sinister, a bit ghoulish, a bit obscene, always emphasizing an unexpectedly wrong aspect of things. He was a bad edition of Friedrich Theodore Visher, who was the same Kautz, but of a loverlier kind. Both have a psychological insight of now negligeable [sic] importance, but these Germans you always have the curious feeling, as if their ideas were things that have happened to them more than that they produced them. Gorddeck's [sic] book had no influence to speak of. It was always considered as a curiosity. (undated letter)

While Groddeck's role in psychoanalysis may no longer (or ever have been) viable, it nonetheless furnished Durrell with rich fictional materials where "a bit sinister, a bit ghoulish, a bit obscene" (Jung) suits far better.

To the point, Durrell Collection at the University of Victoria's McPherson Library gives the most practical source for Semira's striking lack of features and Amaril's endeavors to normalize her appearance in *The Alexandria Quartet*. Among its manuscript and print materials, the collection includes Durrell's own copy of Groddeck's *The Unknown Self*, which has extensive marginalia in Durrell's hand (it reached Victoria because he had loaned it to Alfred Perlès, Van Norden of Miller's *Tropic of* Cancer).

A £ pound-shaped marking (perhaps noting 'payoff') highlights Groddeck's physiognomic assertion on pages 54 through 56: "Protruding eyes betray curiosity and anxiety lest they shall not see enough, or perhaps show continual disgust. And the squinter draws attention to his nose, the symbol of his strength or of his virility" (Groddeck 54). This comment first points to Groddeck's use of physical characteristics as expressions of personality traits, and thereby the likelihood of such a function in Durrell's novels, as other scholars have already noted extensively, especially with relation to eyes; Darley no longer needs glasses and Nessim loses an eye, representing their mutual enlightenments or self-deceptions, and so forth.

Durrell also marked another passage with three vertical, marginal lines:

> We recognise this great importance of the nose only when we see people with noses eaten by disease, and there can hardly be any other cause for the universal fear of *syphilis* than the fact that in comparatively rare cases *syphilis* attacks the bone of the nose. There must be something special about this part of the face, something so shameful that among Europeans it meets with repression in early childhood, and indeed with uncommonly severe repression" (Groddeck 55; emphasis added).

Likewise, Durrell has Amaril (a doctor) review "the possible causes of such a feature [a lost nose], repeating with terror words like *syphilis*" (*Quartet* 513; emphasis mine). This now doubly strong relationship between the "horrible… slit" (515) of Semira's nose and genitals would lend support to a reading of Amaril's rebuilding of Semira as a rebuilding of his own masculinity after having lost Clea's love, and especially since the model for the nose is masculine: "a soldier in a Theban fresco" (*Quartet* 511) transcribed by Clea. Clea, who normally paints for Balthazar's venereal disease clinic in order to capture the colour of the sores of a patient, has instead moved to painting noses for Amaril, and the reader need not catch the allusion to Tristram Shandy to recognize the phallic displacement of the "horrible… slit" underway. Penis-envy is likely the psychoanalytic joke here, though humour would seem to be Durrell's primary purpose.

Finally, Durrell marked a third passage on *Tristram Shandy*-like noses, where Groddeck states

> How close the relations are between the nose and the sex-organs is proved by the results obtained in diseases of the genitalia by means of cocaine application to the particular parts of the membrane of the nose. The mouth? That does not need to speak in order to tell us what the It [the Id] wishes to say" (56).

Groddeck is pointing to his notion of physical disease reflecting unconscious motivations, which in itself informs Freud's often-criticized biological determinism. The importance of this passage is reinforced by Durrell's marginalia in Stekel's *Conditions of Nervous Anxiety*, held in the Bibliothèque de Lawrence Durrell in l'Université Paris X, in Nanterre. In the back cover, in his second column of notes, Durrell wrote "49 nose," and a marginal dot marks the passage: "the nose, as irrefutably proved by *Fliess* forms a centre for the nervous tissue which serves the sexual organs. The connection between the genitalia and the nose has been proved" (Stekel 49).

While these turn-of-the-century theories may not seem reasonable to a modern audience, their usefulness for Durrell's striking fictional images seems clear. Just as Groddeck's equation of physical disease with psychosomatic illness deriving from the creative expression of the It (roughly like Freud's Id) has been securely related to Durrell's fiction by MacNiven, Sohby, and Pine, so too should Amaril's surgical reconstruction of a nose and Semira's deformity of lacking a nose. This suggests a number of rich readings, such as Semira's phallic lack and Amaril's desire for potency in a time of helplessness and destruction. He cannot fight the war, being impotent in this regard, yet he can symbolically create the perfect phallus for his lover (troubling the heteronormative nature of this new relationship in a way akin to my discussion of sexualities in the final chapter).

Also of significance is Groddeck's contention that

> The It is ambivalent, making mysterious but deep-meaning play with will and counter-will, with wish and counter-wish, driving the sick man into a dual relation with his doctor so that he loves him as his best friend and helper, yet sees in him a menace to that artistic effort, his illness" (101; underlining Durrell's).

This same passage is underlined again when it is quoted in the translator's preface (Groddeck 28), suggesting that it held particular relevance to Durrell's reading. This physiognomic approach is useful to reading Amaril and Semira in the *Alexandria Quartet*, such that the success and delight of Semira in having her illness cured reinforces the possibility that her acquisition of Amaril as a lover (possession of the phallus) is the artistic culmination of her illness—she has achieved the purpose of her "comparatively rare" (Groddeck 55) disfigurement in Groddeck's conceptualization of disease. This also points back to the distinctions between Freud's Unknown and Durrell and Miller's, as is outlined in my Introduction.

Returning to Miller's allusions, again paralleling Nietzsche's "The Antichrist," Miller writes earlier in his career:

> Up to the present, my idea in collaborating with myself has been to get off the gold standard of literature. My idea briefly has been to present a resurrection of the emotions, to depict the conduct of a human being in the stratosphere of ideas, that is, in the grip of delirium. To paint a pre-Socratic being, a creature part goat, part Titan. In short, to erect a world on the basis of the *omphalos*, not on the abstract idea nailed to a cross. Here and there you may come across neglected statues, oases untapped, windmills overlooked by Cervantes, rivers that run uphill, women with five and six breasts ranged longitudinally along the torso. (*Tropic of Cancer* 224).

In addition, Miller makes his point explicit in his *Hamlet* correspondence with Michael Fraenkel, in response to Fraenkel's praise for Eliot's "Hamlet and His Problems": "that trick of Socrates that Nietzsche so bitterly lampooned—…doubting of the inner voice. Every time you come to a realization of self you doubt, you run away , you cry 'Ghost! Ghost!'" (312).

These allusions to Nietzsche are twofold, pointing to two major themes in Nietzsche's works that are distinct yet necessary to each other: his epistemology and ontology. For both Miller and Durrell, this relationship between knowing and being, or more precisely, *who* is being, form the most overt instance of the 'unknown,' an unknown that "is a 'beyond,' [that which]... *is* impenetrable" (Durrell, "Studies" 48; italics original). Just as Mona/Mara is "[im]penetrable" (*Sexus* 210), so too is the unknown. The reader of *The Rosy Crucifixion* is primed for this relationship very early on and is told by the narrator:

> you have for company the best companion you could ever have—the modest, defeated, plodding, workaday self which has a name and which can be identified in public registers in case of accident or death. But the real self, the one who has taken over the reins, is almost a stranger. He is the one who is filled with ideas; he is the one who is writing in the air; he is the one who, if you become too fascinated with his exploits, will finally expropriate the old, worn-out self, taking over your name, your address, your wife, your past, your future. Naturally, when you walk in on an old friend in this euphoric state he doesn't wish to concede immediately that you have another life, a life apart in which he has no share. (*Sexus* 29)

One of the most immediately prominent features of this passage is its opening "you," which identifies this description with the reader, rather than the narrator. As with Mona/Mara's fluidity, the stability offered by locators such as "a name... [or] public registers" (29) is disturbed when this unknown Self is able to displace the identity covered by these imposed restrictions: 'you' "would be other names, other persons, other assemblages of appendages" (Miller, *Sexus* 210). Moreover, this other Self or "[o]ther life" is "almost a stranger" and seems difficult to trace or identify in any recognizable way (Miller, *Sexus* 29).

This essential instability of identity, where it is not only ambiguous (which of 'your' identities is the narrator writing about, and which will the reader assume is the primary 'self' of the characters he or she is accumulating ambiguous descriptions of), seems to be Miller's organizing principle here. If articulated in the same manner as Nietzsche's notions of selfhood, it places any such identity outside of the ambiguous and more firmly in the space of the unknowable. When mocking 'logicians,' Nietzsche makes the firm note that

> a thought comes when 'it' wishes and not when 'I' wish, so that it is a falsification of the facts of the case to say that the subject 'I' is the condition of the predicate 'think.' *It* thinks, but that this 'it' is precisely the old famous 'ego' [Ich or 'I'] is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an 'immediate certainty'." (*Beyond Good* 24; emphasis original)

This passage is central to Durrell's and Miller's texts, and it is the "trick of Socrates which Nietzsche so bitterly lampooned" that I have referred to earlier (Miller, *Hamlet* 312). While Nietzsche rejects what Miller has later retitled "the modest, defeated, plodding, workaday self which has a name and which can be identified in public registers" (*Sexus* 29), Nietzsche does point to some more essential identity, or at least he is specific enough to not deny such a thing. Similarly, Miller overtly affirms such an identity while arguing against its location in the places typically associated with it. However, in making this indeterminate gesture to any Self that might exist beyond 'everydayness' or the supposed Self, Nietzsche quickly argues against locating this Self in consciousness: it "is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an 'immediate certainty'" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 24).

If the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* is to be rejected, since "I" and "thought" cannot be related as subject and predicate, then thought cannot be the location of that "I." Nietzsche seems to contend that *whatever* such an I might be, and *wherever* it might reside, we will not find it in the places we normally tend to look. It must remain in the domain of the unknowable, lest these same errors arise and it again becomes concealed by supposition and projection. Miller's text seems to open this possibility of leaving a more essential Self unknown and unfixed when identity is deleted. Mona/Mara, is described as his only supporter, and in his search for another he finds "that [he] could find no who believed in

[him]" (*Sexus* 28). The pronoun of "one" (the gap in my quotation) *is not printed in the text.* This is on the page *immediately preceding* his extended passage on the fluidity of the Self (29), hence leaving the reader uncertain of the relationship between a singular identifier of a person or the plural that is implicit in the narrator's argument on the next page for a multiplicity of selves that cannot be designated or distinguished in any meaningful manner. The visible gap,   the white space in the text where the impersonal pronoun should sit instead voices this unknown in such a way that *knowing* this identity is itself antithetical to its nature.

Much later, Miller again gestures to this gap in the representable, which is filled via projection: "The damned are always petrified, and in the center of their petrification is immeasurable emptiness. The damned have always the same excuse—the loss of the beloved" (*Sexus* 489). In this case, 'Self' is an identification with another, who is in turn constituted by projection, as is suggested by the emptiness that results from the loss of this external screen. In losing the beloved, "The [petrified] damned" experience a symbolic loss of Self because the beloved contains the externalized contents of the Self. In an epistemologically similar manner, but with regard to acts of perception (which might apply equally well to perceiving the world as perceiving the Self), Nietzsche contends: "One had made of reality an 'appearance'; one had made a completely *fabricated* world, that of being, into reality...." ("The Antichrist" 133; emphasis original). Likewise, "The [petrified] damned" make of the unknown elements of the Self a fabrication deriving from the "project[ions of] the mind machine" onto the Other (Miller, *Sexus* 489, 209).

ii. Locating "Io" in *The Revolt of Aphrodite*

Very similar notions of selfhood are at work in Durrell's texts. As a particularly salient work, *The Revolt of Aphrodite* is often seen as an aberration in Durrell's career, standing between the commercially successful *Alexandria Quartet* and his artistically culminating *Avignon Quintet*. Critical reaction has generally "failed to grasp" (Fraser 149) its ultimate purpose. The novel pair has also been the subject of less that one-sixth the number of scholarly articles dedicated to the *Alexandria Quartet*, and many reviews are derogatory in tone, such as Boston's typical comment that "Durrell says... he 'tried to move from the preposterous to the sublime.' To me it seemed firmly settled in the preposterous, with no sign of shifting from there" (Boston 20). This general unease also prevails among Durrell's friends and favourable critics. In France, where Durrell's works enjoy a degree of canonicity, Rolland notes that in the *Revolt of Aphrodite* "Nous abordons ici une œuvre de Durrell qui a pu sembler mineure aprés la grand-messe de *Quatuor*. En tout cas, elle a dérouté son public en 1970 et n'a pas vraiment retenu l'attention des critiques" (Rolland 179). Even Alan G. Thomas, who as a close friend always gives positive comments on Durrell's works, remarks "For me the city of Alexandria itself was so memorable a part of the Quartet, one of the finest evocations of a city, that I would not (so far) place Tunc first," although he does make the significant comment "undoubtedly it is Larry's most important work since the Alexandria Quartet, indeed both Faber's and Dutton's consider it to be the best book he has written. Certainly it contains his finest prose and is a marvelous and exciting work" (Letter to Robert Simpson n.pag). In a letter to a collector, this is tepid praise indeed, especially for Durrell's *only* book since *The Alexandria Quartet*.

While work exists on the structure of the two novels,[82] relatively little has been done to show the *Revolt of Aphrodite*'s place in Durrell's development from the *Alexandria Quartet* to the *Avignon Quintet*. Most importantly, no study has yet examined the *Revolt of Aphrodite* in the context of Durrell's lifelong interest in Friedrich Nietzsche, which ties it closely to Miller and the 'unknown.'

Unlike the *Alexandria Quartet*, the *Revolt of Aphrodite* reverses Durrell's famous technique of gradually revealing facts into what, here, becomes an untenable approach to a multiplicitous world that is more familiar to a late twentieth century frame of reference than the World War II setting of the *Alexandria Quartet*. While critics such as Raper and Zahlan dissent,[83] Dasenbrock effectively makes the case that the *Quartet* works "comfortably within the modes of modernist fiction" (Dasenbrock 516), where the complete uncertainty that "represents a revolt against those modes" (Dasenbrock 516) has not yet appeared. In the *Alexandria Quartet*, it is not entirely clear what Durrell's organizing thoughts are with regard to the relationship between the individual and social institutions; nor had he overtly addressed Nietzsche's distinction between a 'real' versus an 'apparent' world, despite working in a perspectival frame, as Rose has persuasively argued (Rose, "Multiple Truths"

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[82] See Dickson's "Setting and Character in *The Revolt of Aphrodite*" (528-535) and "Spengler's Theory of Architecture in Durrell's Tunc and Nunquam" (272-280) or Rugset's "Tunc-Nunquam: The Quest for Wholeness" (216-222). Rugset contributes the most to analysing the form, noting the numerical structure "consists of 14 chapters and 44 sections. If the 44 sections are divided by the fourteen chapters, the result is 3.14, in other words, π" (Rugset 216). Durrell spoke openly when asked ten years later at the 1986, saying "the pi notion [in the novel pair] is really the sort of mason's sign of an architectural mathematic" (Brown n.pag). In addition to structure and frequent use of spiral or domed images, the plot sequence within each of novels is circular. *Tunc* opens with Charlock's insane dictation of his biography, moving through the sanity of his relationship with Iolanthe and his development toward insanity through Benedicta and the firm. In a contrary manner, *Nunquam* opens with Charlock having more or less regained his sanity after treatments in an asylum, again returning to the firm and the insane creation of the robotic Iolanthe duplicate, through to a full return to sanity. *Nunquam* opens with Charlock in the asylum called Palhaus and the action of the novel concluding with the robot-Iolanthe and Julian's death in Saint Paul's Cathedral. This additional circularity also appears in *Tunc*, with the novel opening and closing in Athens.

[83] For instance, see Raper's "Lawrence Durrell's *Balthazar* (1958): Breaking the Modernist Mold" and Zahlan's "Crossing the Border: Lawrence Durrell's Alexandrian Conversion to Postmodernism."

215-238). While perspective and artistic autonomy are major subjects in the *Alexandria Quartet*—foreshadowing their development in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*—Durrell had not yet worked on the problem of the institution versus the individual (Kaczvinsky, "Durrell and the Political Unrest" 171). To make this more difficult, by the time of the *Avignon Quintet*, Durrell's explicit focus on the individual in society was subsumed to his broader concerns and is less clear. Therefore, a closer reading of the *Revolt of Aphrodite* provides a context where previous readings of only the surface or form of the text are problematic, and where questions of the Self and knowledge of that Self may be most fruitfully articulated in a Nietzschean framework.

While the *Alexandria Quartet* primarily develops retrospective revision as its central theoretical 'idea,' along with a sense of uncertainty about some distant but acknowledged 'reality prime,'[84] the *Revolt of Aphrodite* moves to a framework where phenomenological truths are totally unavailable, and where multiplicity—paired with irresolvable estrangement—becomes the normal relationship between the individual and a reality peppered with mutually contradictory knowledge systems, including self-knowledge. For these middle novels, the reality prime of the *Alexandria Quartet*, that is presumed to be 'out there,' but connected by some posited chain of causality, is no longer a gold standard (Durrell's use of the term likely deriving from Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, 224). It is, instead, a 'monkey-trap'—a hand can reach in but the clenched fist closed over the prize cannot withdraw. As the searcher reaches in through the narrow aperture to grab the prize, his closed fist cannot withdraw. Orr and Peirce both imply much of this in their respective comparisons of Durrell to the 'postmodern' Thomas Pynchon, and Widmer calls Durrell the "British counterpart" (Widmer 238) to Pynchon, which is interesting considering Durrell was "refused British citizenship" in 1966 in an attempt to "reduc[e] immigration to Britain from India, Pakistan and the West Indies" (Ezard n.pag). Kaczvinsky extends the suggestion of Durrell's postmodern prescience in his assertion that the *Revolt of Aphrodite* "shows remarkable similarities to what Jameson... defines as postmodern society" ("Bringing Him" 64) and postmodern pastiche. While Kaczvinsky's work is largely persuasive and the general suggestion that Durrell anticipates postmodern sensibilities holds, Durrell's notions of perception and self-perception are more significant to his development than is his critique of late capitalism and consumerism (in much the same way, the difficulties of introspection are a more unifying element in Miller's fiction than is the autobiographical source material of his painful relationship with June). Durrell's distinction between contradictory realities mirrors Nietzsche's attack on the thought-error of presuming a 'real' versus an 'apparent' world. It is only in this manner that the perception-oriented aspects of the *Revolt of Aphrodite* connect to Durrell's critique of social repression and by proxy to postmodernism.

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[84] It is a commonplace in Durrell's works to find a reference to reality prime or reality^1, reality^2, and so forth, which indicate the proliferation of truths and realities.

In contrast to Kaczvinsky, Christensen takes up the *Revolt of Aphrodite* as a novel of ideas to examine its intertextual references; however, like Boston, he finds Durrell disappointing. 'Borrowing' from an interview, Christensen replaces intertextuality with intellectual burglary and contends: "[the *Revolt of Aphrodite*] w[as] generally seen as intellectually weak by the reviewers. Although Durrell scholars have tried for a decade to rehabilitate the two novels, the initial disappointment appears to have been merited.... Burglary, like any other profession, requires genius" (Christensen 54). What becomes problematic in Christensen's argument is that he uses Dasenbrock to write off humanist readings of the novels and then writes off Dasenbrock as odd for asserting that the novels have "a leftist slant" (Christensen 43) because he, Christensen, holds that Spenglerian thought is the core of the 'stolen' materials. In a work that struggles against imposed unities, the assertion of this oddness is itself odd; however, this leads to more informative conflicts in Christensen's approach. He is frustrated that Durrell *must*, but does not, "accept... responsibility for the truth value of the propositions that he is *adapting*" (Christensen 41; emph. mine) or "attempt faithfully to represent the historical currents of the times" (Christensen 53). First, fiction is not bound to 'truth value,' nor must it be 'faithful' or even consistent to anything. More importantly, this statement is contradicted by the word "adapting." In Durrell's references to Spengler and his adaptation of multiple critical materials, the role of *adaptation* must not be overlooked.

Moreover, in his admirably thorough detailing of politically suspicious authors referenced by Durrell, Christensen makes no mention of skepticism, Nietzsche, or perception, all of which are central to Durrell's oeuvre, as opposed to the peripheral Spengler and Keyrserling. As MacNiven points out, numerous aspects of Durrell's works and life "parallel the thinking of Nietzsche.... The aphorisms of Pursewarden in the *Quartet* and of Sutcliffe in *The Avignon Quintet* would have the ring of Nietzsche's epigrams.... [Moreover,] Larry would create in Caradoc[, of the *Revolt of Aphrodite*,] a comic version of a Nietzschean superman, a man beyond God and evil" (MacNiven 154). As a biographer, he also notes: "Larry sensed that the creator of Zarathustra was vital to his own development" (MacNiven 155). As early as 1937, Durrell "declared [Nietzsche] had said 'MORE OR LESS EVERYTHING'" (MacNiven, *Lawrence Durrell* 154), and shortly thereafter he incorporated quotations from unusual texts by Nietzsche into his publications. Using Christensen's notion of 'burglary' leads to this tension; by tracing Durrell's allusions and sources, the reader is led to the two most fundamental influences on Durrell's thinking, Nietzsche and Eastern/Gnostic skepticism (as even a superficial glance as his poetry will immediately confirm). Yet, criticism on the *Revolt of Aphrodite* pervasively overlooks the influence of Nietzsche, even though both Durrell biographers, MacNiven and Bowker (Bowker 308, 324), mention Nietzsche as a key influence on the work.

Turning to the issues that connect Durrell and Nietzsche, the most significant difference between the *Revolt of Aphrodite* and the *Alexandria Quartet* is Durrell's abandonment of his motion toward ever-greater revelations of 'truth' and realization of the 'Self,' which is partly due to his increased recognition that the Self is not static and cannot be found in the places one tends to look for it. While the eventual 'truths' of the *Alexandria Quartet* are open to reconstruction by the reader (who Durrell encourages in his 'workpoints'), a sense of progress and clarification of confusion is inherent in Durrell's isolating *Clea* as the novel that introduces time, and hence a forward-moving and eschatological structure. In this context, the reader's perception of an ever broadening *understanding* reflects an ongoing *construction* that continually increases in complexity. This potentially returns the reader to the error of asserting that the 'apparent' world misrepresents the 'real' one, which supposes the existence of both. Moreover, the language of this distinction leads to Nietzsche's outlining of the error of confusing the real and apparent—an error Durrell struggles with in the *Alexandria Quartet* and that I will discuss throughout this section.

Durrell depicts Darley, the primary narrator of the *Alexandria Quartet*, as caught in an attempt to fictionally capture the 'real' world, even though he tells us that his senses and interpretations lie to him about it. Nietzsche sarcastically prefigures Darley's quest when he describes philosophers as saying "'It must be an *illusion*, a *deception* which prevents us from perceiving that which *is*: where is the deceiver to be found?' - 'We've got it,' they cry in delight, 'it is the *senses*... which *deceive* us about the *real* world" (Nietzsche, *Twilight* 45; emphasis mine). The deconstruction of this grasping after the 'real' world behind the 'lies' of the senses leads Nietzsche to momentarily claim "the apparent world is the only one: the 'real' world has only been *lyingly added*" (*Twilight* 46; emphasis original), though he then goes on to give the "HISTORY OF AN ERROR" (*Twilight* 50), leading from Plato's cave, through the unification-cum-distinction between perceptions and the world, and ending with skepticism: "We have abolished the real world: what world is left? The apparent world perhaps? ... But no! *with the real world we have also abolished the apparent world*" (*Twilight* 51; emphasis original). Nietzsche even rebuts the naïve suggestion that the senses lie, apart from the error of assuming they lie about 'something': "they do not lie at all. It is what we *make* of their evidence that first introduces the lie... for example the lie of unity, the lie of materiality, of substance, of duration" (*Twilight* 46; emphasis original). This new position of skepticism is the same one Darley develops throughout the *Alexandria Quartet* (even though he seeks unity, as Kaczvinsky argues) and which Felix delivers the reader into fully in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*.

In addition to Durrell's thoughts on perception that advance through the sets of novels, the *Revolt of Aphrodite* is a clear development from Durrell's earlier work, leading to the thematic and philosophic material of the *Avignon Quintet*. Richard Pine, through his extensive examination of Durrell's journals, claims "rather than regarding *Tunc-Nunquam* as somehow outside the Durrell canon, an interruption of the *roman fleuve* from *Quartet* to

Quintet, it is an integral and systemic part of his conception of his lifework" ("Aquarians" 65). Contrary to modernity's telos of continued development, which relates to both the philosophical issues Durrell uses and the social critique in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, Durrell presents social problems as caused by the overly 'Apollonian' or rationalizing influence of the panoptical 'firm,' Merlins, so that it is the pursuit of perfection that causes the increase in and profitability of human misery. It is the restriction of multiplicity and contingency, the shrouding of 'Dionysian' mystery under "knowledge," that is destructive. It forces the characters toward a specific goal and restrictive social identity.

In the novel pair, such goals are repeatedly shown to be constructs without links to absolute values, absolute values being themselves constructions without reference to any stable truths. Moreover, unlike the *Alexandria Quartet*, the *Revolt of Aphrodite* struggles, in its form, against such an ordering influence; it leaves contradictions unresolved and the conclusion is inconclusive, despite its mathematically symmetrical structure reflecting π— it "consists of 14 chapters and 44 sections" or 7/22 (Rugset 216).

In a system that does not acknowledge the existence of absolute values, establishing absolute goals denigrates multiplicity. It is only in the 'Dionysian' spirit (in the context of the novel pair), that the freedom that counter-balances the firm can be found. Caradoc's speech on the Acropolis is the Twentieth Century's "Sermon on the Mount" (Durrell, *Tunc* 61), emphasizing the necessity for an integration of the Dionysian spirit into our age of Apollonian absolutes. This injection of the Dionysian, reminiscent of Durrell's poem "Deus Loci," contradicts the possibility of an absolute goal, intrinsic in the 'Apollonian' search for perfectibility. With one perspective or valuation being as valid or invalid as another, increasing accuracy loses meaning.

Furthermore, the characters in the *Revolt of Aphrodite* are more clearly 'unreal' than that of the *Alexandria Quartet*. They act as figurines that represent the social commentary in the novels. Durrell described the pair as a novel that "does not pretend to pretend" (Fraser 155); the reader is not meant to confuse the tale as naturalistic but should recognize it as belonging to the moral fable. More than the *Alexandria Quartet*, which is most commonly associated with modernist, naturalist depiction, the *Revolt of Aphrodite* continues the surreal and stylized characterization that began Durrell's career in *The Black Book*, "Zero" and "Asylum In The Snow." Like these early works, Durrell's tactic in the *Revolt of Aphrodite* is a broadly encompassing approach to the instability of the ego, the imperfect nature of narrative, and the questionable existence of any absolute reality connected by an *assumed* causal relationship to the imperfect psyche's perceptions.

Kaczvinsky describes the novel pair as embodying Durrell's decisive break from Modernism and his motion toward multiplicity without resolution, which is seen more explicitly in the *Avignon Quintet*. His reading is supported by the epistemological skepticism, moments of metafictional self-referentiality, textual commentaries on potential unreality, and contesting versions of reality that become more frequent in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*. Such breakthroughs as Darley achieves in his artistic realization of the 'absolute now' at the conclusion of the *Alexandria Quartet* (865), have no place in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*. Felix Charlock (the narrator) concludes that his varying, false realizations of self are continually changing and reconstructed through both 'madness' and the intrinsic instability of the psyche; after all, he is only a "thinking weed" (Durrell, *Tunc* 11).

An escape to an idyllic Greek island, such as the one from which Darley writes at the opening of the *Alexandria Quartet*, cannot occur for Felix or Caradoc (who attempts it), as the entrepreneurial world of the firm is ever-expanding, seeking out new markets. The artist's grate becomes a marketplace where the artist must purchase his independence on credit, and make payments to his owners in exchange for his artistic 'product.' The multinational corporate firm, Merlins, symbolically represents 'excellence' and striving for perfectibility, though it is without a purpose apart from a teleological profit motive, and its very presence creates the ominous threat of madness, death, and Foucauldian punishment. In its sense of contractual obligation and enforced conformity, the firm is responsible for the fragmentation of the individual, which creates conflict, but the pursuit of autonomy is also illusionary since even alienation is disallowed. The existential 'trial' develops into the artistic realm as well, but art and identity offer no ideals or escapes.

For Charlock, this inward motion toward his construction of the Self is repressed directly by society via the discursive form of madness and the threat of imprisonment. Difference is deamed mad, madness requires institutionalization, and a cure that puts him in agreement with social norms is necessary. Foucault explores the same concepts in *Madness and Civilization*, where he shows that "Reason and Madness [are relegated] to one side or the other" (Foucault ix)[85] in a binary. In an ironic contradiction of Dostoevsky's intent in *Diary of a Writer*, Foucault demonstrates how in a social structure "'It is... by confining one's neighbor that one is convinced of one's own sanity'" (Foucault ix; quoting Dostoevsky) and publicly exhibits it. Nonetheless, in the *Revolt of Aphrodite* introspection itself, in the form of a 'biographical dictation' (the form of the first person narrative), becomes the defining element of Charlock's 'madness,' against which his neighbours define their apparent sanity.

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[85] For more information on Durrell and Foucault, see my "Foucault's Dialectic of 'Madness' in Durrell's *Zero and Asylum In The Snow*: The Liberations of Helplessness And The Restrictions of Freedom" or Durrell's comments in "Endpapers and Inklings."

Charlock even claims that in his scientific pursuits, he "would have liked to achieve in [his] line whatever would correspond to a work of art - which [his] friend Koepgen has defined as an act of disciplined insubordination" (Durrell, *Tunc* 151). Through this focus on rebellion and Otto Rank's concept of the artwork as an act of social rebellion, Charlock's emphasis (and perhaps Durrell's as well) moves away from external reality and to the internal 'truths' of his monologue, which are themselves subject to skepticism. Likewise, any expression of this internal 'truth' through the outer social persona is reason for imprisonment and the label "insane." Society cannot allow itself to be contradicted by "disciplined insubordination" (Durrell, *Tunc* 151) any more than it can allow 'mad' riots of organized resistance or expression of differing beliefs (a theme that is equally viable for Durrell's experience of the General Strike in France as it is for our Seattle, Genoa, and Quebec City demonstrations thirty years later).

For Charlock, a sense of epistemological skepticism is implicit in this internal and external struggle between Self and society, and can be seen in the firm's explicit control and the internal aesthetic desire to live life without the demands of causality. In the *Revolt*, the downfall of causality relates directly to doubts about one's knowledge systems and perspectivally uncertain knowledge of the world and Self. While

> watching the trees go by and the poles leap and fall, leap and fall, [Charlock] reflected on Merlin and on the F. of F. The Fund of Funds, the Holy Grail of all we stood for. Nash had said so often recently: "I hope you are not thinking about trying to escape from the firm, Charlock. It wouldn't work, you know?".... At what point does a man decide that life must be lived *unhesitatingly*? Presumably after exhausting every other field - in my case the

> scientific modes: science, its tail comes off in your hand like a scared lizard. (Durrell, *Tunc* 21; emphasis original)

The proximity between the firm's signs of social control over the individual and the goal of a Dionysian life "lived *unhesitatingly*" (Durrell, *Tunc* 21; emphasis original) hints at the close relationship between Charlock's loyalties and his views on epistemology: after various ways of searching for truth are lost (science in this instance) the only response left is living without hesitation, hesitation that derives from fear of progression or regression (the distinction is lost). This link is more obvious when the reader becomes aware of the church-like firm's obsession to control a world that is *certain* and perfect through an imposed telos: the continued growth and expansion of the firm itself (the 'Holy Grail' is hardly a symbol of Dionysian frenzy).

Moreover, "unhesitating" reminds the reader of Nietzsche's "to *live dangerously*" (*Gay Science* 228). The "secret for harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is—to *live dangerously*" (*Gay Science* 228), and this notion resembles Durrell's ambiguous conclusions to his novel sets. The moment of greatest possibility is the leap into the unknown, such as Darley's epiphanic decision to write, Blanford's decent into the booby-trapped caves under Avignon, or Charlock's destruction of the firm's contracts. In his act, Charlock intentionally presumes nothing with regard to what results may occur, if any.

Linking Durrell's unhesitating improvisation and Nietzsche's dangerousness to the real-apparent discussion, is Nietzsche's contention that the error of positing a real versus an apparent is a way of valuing oneself: "The real and the apparent world.... We... projected the conditions of our preservation as predicates of being in general" (*Will to Power* 276).

Likewise, Charlock states a few pages before his dictum to live unhesitatingly that "Causality is an attempt to mesmerise the world into some sort of significance. We cannot bear its indifference" (Durrell, *Tunc* 17), which reminds the reader of Durrell's longstanding interest in Rank (who was notably inspired by Nietzsche) and hence the role of fear in the construction of metaphysics. This need for self-preservation and significance, in turn, reinforces Nietzsche's contention that "anxiety attend[s] the unknown—the first instinct is to *eliminate* th[is] distressing state.... The cause-creating drive is thus conditioned and excited by the feeling of fear" (*Twilight* 62; emphasis original).[86] This creation of causes, then, is the gap-filling process involved in the 'unknown.' By making the reader progressively more self-aware of this process, Durrell draws attention to the error.

In his early "Asylum in the Snow," Durrell even conjoins an epigram from Nietzsche with the contention: "When you are afraid of something..., you give it a name out of the alphabet. Then you can let it into the house and it will not hurt you. It is covered in a name, and you do not see it properly, you only see the little black letters" (Durrell, "Asylum" 261). Charlock's discovery of the epistemological uncertainty of his knowledge systems—their 'tail' comes off in his hands—prompts his distinction between an enforced external personality and the internal 'artistic' self, although both are eventually subsumed in the uncertainty of unhesitating improvisation, or dangerous living, where no Self needs to be articulated. Articulating it fills the gap and hides the 'unknown'—a full sense of the 'unknown' that reunites Miller's original sense of self-exploration and Durrell' rearticulation of it as the reader's gap filling. Charlock realizes "science is the barren midwife of matter"

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[86] Self-esteem, seen as significance in one's social group, is regarded in the Terror Management Theory paradigm that I have discussed earlier as an effective buffer against the anxiety created by mortality salience. There is symmetry, then, with Nietzsche's notion fo the fear-provoked cause creating drive.

(Durrell, *Tunc* 74), which reveals his disillusionment and leads him to resist the Apollonian certainties of the firm. He instead adopts 'Dionysian' revelry, unhesitating improvisation, as is seen in his destruction of the firm's records, the multinational corporation's contracts, which is not accompanied by expectations for the results.

Returning to epistemological skepticism on the textual level, we find that the reader is inundated with casual comments on the uncertainty of truth and knowledge. These casual asides reinforce Durrell's mirroring of Nietzsche's idea of the error of the real versus the apparent. Both volumes of the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, *Tunc* and *Nunquam*, open with an immediate reference to such skepticism, which emphasizes its significance to the work's focus; Charlock muses that "Reality is what is most conspicuous by its absence" (Durrell, *Tunc* 11), while *Nunquam* opens with a double reference to the conclusion of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (a pair of associations that run throughout Durrell's career): "Asleep or awake - what difference? Or rather, if there were a difference how would you recognise it? And if it were a recognisable difference would there be anything or anyone to care if you did or not - some angel with a lily-gilded whisper to say: 'Well done.'? Ay, there's the rub" (Durrell, *Nunquam* 11). After these introductions, the reader is prepared to examine Durrell's skepticism toward knowledge and perception, which follows in each volume.

Dissatisfaction with perception and knowledge is the cornerstone of Durrell's motion toward 'postmodernism,' and although the *Revolt of Aphrodite* moves beyond the strictly perspective-based approach of the *Alexandria Quartet*, this initial form of skepticism regarding the reliability of observation and memory is strong. At first, Durrell emphasizes the unreliability of the human senses and mind. Charlock comes to the conclusion that "the trouble with memory, and its prolix self-seeding process, is that it can always by-pass the points of intersection at which we recognise, or seem to recognise, the action of a temporal causality" (Durrell, *Tunc* 86). Moreover, he is prompted by his problem with the constructed nature of human memory to interrogate the construction of perceptions. This multiplicity is reminiscent of the *Quartet*, with the exception that it has no tendency toward gradually unravelling 'misperceptions' toward a truth, a resolution of the 'unknown.' Despite first appearances, this is not the "immoral" senses "deceiv[ing] us about the real world" (Nietzsche, *Twilight* 45), but rather an unseating of the 'real' and 'apparent' distinction, as well as the presumed 'hyper-reality' beyond the senses. Both are errors of the mind's tendency to order the universe. In the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, the distance between subject and object is without resolution; both become subject to doubt.

At the culmination of Caradoc's architectural speech at the Acropolis (a speech that is a thinly veiled analysis of Western Civilization), Sipple's interruption and leap from the high 'wall' become a mystical uncertainty; the 'order' of the analysis is dispelled by the 'chaos' of the uninterpretable. Charlock realizes

> The whole episode had been so strange and so sudden that some must have wondered if the whole thing was not an illusion. Had we dreamed up Sipple? His disappearance was so sudden and so complete. One could see nothing very clearly. (Durrell, *Tunc* 80)

This inability to see anything "very clearly" points to every character's failed search for some form of truth throughout the novel pair, whether it is a personal, social, or universal truth. No event is ever seen very clearly, and even the reader has direct discourse hidden while the voice of character and narrator blur behind a thick, gauzy veil of sensuous words. The firm's need for certainty in knowledge conflicts with the uncertainty generated by its fracturing of the private self of the individual. The construct of a private self cannot reconcile its need for personal, perspective-based and provisional truths against the firm's need to impose arbitrary absolutes and contractual obligations. The challenge is not unlike Orwell's 'double-think' in *1984*, an author who bears a considerable influence on both Durrell and Miller,[87] despite the brevity of their acquaintance and rarity of their encounters. Moreover, the last sentence of this passage is telling: "One could see nothing very clearly." In its double meaning, nothing or the 'unknown' becomes palpable—"One could see [the unresolved gap] very clearly."

Several scenes develop this uncertainty and lead away from the error of the lying senses. Count Banubula, in a unkempt paroxysm, asks Charlock if it is not true that the quandry of the senses versus the natural tendency to construct causality is ultimately without resolution:

> He lay back, closing his eyes and breathing coolly through his nose. Then he said in somewhat oracular fashion: 'Haven't you noticed Charlock that most things in life happen just outside one's range of vision? One has to see them out of the corner of one's eye. And any one thing could be the effect of any number of others? I mean there seem to be always a dozen perfectly appropriate explanations to every phenomenon. That is what makes our reasoning minds so unsatisfactory; and yet, they are all we've got, this shabby piece of equipment'. (Durrell, *Tunc* 100)

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[87] This is an understudied relationship, and to my knowledge it has never been discussed, except in George Wickes' "Henry Miller: Down and Out in Paris." Also see Durrell's letters to Orwell, "The Booster," or the final sentence of Miller's *Rosy Crucifixion* trilogy, which heavily alludes to Orwell's *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (Miller, *Nexus* 316).

Superficially, this perceptual uncertainty is similar to that of the *Alexandria Quartet* and Nietzsche's error-ridden philosophers, except that the development of the narrative in the *Revolt of Aphrodite* surrenders no ground to gradually revealed truths and knowledge. The 'facts' Charlock discovers about his surroundings and acquaintances are never certain or prove a reality. As with Nietzsche, "facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations.... It is our needs that interpret the world" (Nietzsche, *Will* 267). In effect, the "shabby piece of equipment" (Durrell, *Tunc* 100) is a "thinking weed" (Durrell, *Tunc* 11) that orders and constructs based on needs, fears, and instincts. The senses, no matter how blurry, are never improved in their representation of reality (such as Darley's continually improving eyesight in the *Alexandria Quartet* or Sutcliffe's increasingly poor eyesight in *Monsieur*); these blurs *are* reality, with reality always being constructed from the senses, and they cannot be claimed to represent anything further. Such resolutions of the 'unknown' by the "thinking weed" are precisely what Durrell sets out in his rearticulation of Miller.

Durrell's lack of a development from faulty knowledge to a more accurate means of knowing denigrates the reliability of knowledge and the process by which it acquires veracity. The most striking image in the novel pair (especially for those whose career is dedicated to reading) is Benedicta's enormous library in her English country estate. When Charlock remembers it, he remarks:

> The library! Of course I did not discover the fact until later, but this huge and beautifully arranged room with its galleries and moulded squinches, its sea-green dome, its furnishings of globes, atlases, astrolabes, gazeteers, was a fake; all the books in it were empty dummies! Yet to browse among the titles one would have imagined the room to contain virtually the sum total of

> European culture. But the books were all playful make-believe, empty buckram and gilt. (Durrell, *Tunc* 189)

Durrell himself collected publisher dummies (empty books) and used them as his writing notebooks. Aside from this biographical slippage, the empty library comments on the lack of content in even the normally stocked reserves of texts or library stacks; they offer no truths. Charlock's first perception is the image of the library containing "the sum total of European culture" (Durrell, *Tunc* 189), while his later discovery demonstrates that his percept is far different from the 'actuality.' One could say that his 'immoral' senses have lied to him, but more exactly he has mistakenly made the assumption that there is a 'hyper-reality' behind his percepts. He erroneously filled the gap and let his expectations alter the texts. This is both a reminder of the easy error of assuming a 'real' world heralding the 'apparent' or perceived. The insinuation throughout the novel pair is that the "sum total of European culture" (Durrell, *Tunc* 189) is nothing more than "make-believe, empty buckram and gilt" (Durrell, *Tunc* 189), or to use Miller's apt phrase, "two enormous lumps of shit" (*Tropic of Cancer* 103). Durrell's relationship to Nietzsche's work here demonstrates his abandonment of the real-apparent world duality; Charlock's view of the library renders him 'book-perceptive,' and "[i]t is what [he] *make[s]* of [his senses'] evidence that first introduces a lie" (Nietzsche, *Twilight* 46; emphasis original). Namely, Charlock imposes unity and coherence on his perceptions so that they reflect his interests, needs, and previous experiences, which in turn necessitates his supposition of a 'real' world beyond the 'apparent.'

A second issue arises surrounding the death of Sacrapant, whose suicide is never fully resolved in the novels, just like Pursewarden's suicide in the *Alexandria Quartet*. It is 'revealed' (temporarily) that contrary to appearances, Sacrapant was instructed to assassinate

Charlock, but had been unable to comply. This reason for his suicide is added to the mystery of the event, where causality cannot be positively shown and no definite reason can be uncovered. Charlock comments:

> the death of Sacrapant... was *so sudden and so unexpected* that it deafened the mind - though afterwards of course it was explained satisfactorily. Events of this kind are always clothed in a fictitious causality when we see them in retrospect. Was it, though? (Durrell, *Tunc* 156; emphasis mine)

This reminds the reader of Sipple's leap, "so *strange and so sudden...* the whole thing [seemed] an illusion" (Durrell, *Tunc* 80; emph. mine). To this he adds: "I realised that *any* explanation would do, and that all would forever remain merely *provisional*. Was this perhaps true for all of us, for all our actions? Yes, yes" (Durrell, *Tunc* 158; emphasis added). This harkens back to Nietzsche's dictum that "it is our needs that interpret the world" (*Will to Power* 267). Following Charlock's exclamations of uncertainty and need for *any* explanation, Hippolyta comments on the connection between causality and the adoption of skepticism: "There seems to be a hundred reasons to account for every act. Finally one hesitates to ascribe any one of them to the act. Life gets more and more mysterious, not less" (Durrell, *Tunc* 230).

Furthermore, Charlock encounters the same difficulty when structuring his recordings to accurately represent the lives of his dead friends (ordering the supreme uncertainty, death). This foreshadows the parallel difficulty Bruce encounters in the *Avignon Quintet*, where "[In] the very act of recording things one makes them submit to a kind of ordering which may be false, proceeding as if causality was the real culprit. Yet the element of chance, of accident, had so much to do with what became of [everything] that it seems impossible to search out first causes" (Durrell, *Avignon* 169).

For Charlock, the false ordering of audio recordings of his companions—or of memory and sense in the robot reconstruction of his former lover Iolanthe—ultimately reflects his lingering unease with the arbitrary nature of reality around him. His development throughout the *Revolt* begins with a state of improvisation in the Dionysian world of Athens and Iolanthe's brothel, through the Apollonian firm of London and its need to search out and create order, and finally back to the acceptance of contingency in the climactic destruction of the firm's records of contracts. He does not know, or even anticipate, what the results will be, and the reader is left with only confusion and mystery, which is as the world should be. As Durrell comments, "all relations between events and objects in this world partake of the mystery of the unknown, and I doubt if we are more justified in covering one set of events with concepts like 'disease'... [rather than] 'coincidence'" (*Key* 81).

The robotic form of Iolanthe, resurrected in *Nunquam*,[88] realizes this same recreation of past events through a Proustian sense of memory. For her—partly due to her few real life experiences and programmed memory filled with recreations of the real Iolanthe's life—reality and truth are best defined through the active (re)construction of the past. She tells Charlock:

> I do things backwards. Experiences don't register with me while they are happening. But afterwards, suddenly in a flash I see their meaning, I relive them and experience them properly. That is what happened to me with you.

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[88] This science fiction element of the text is highlighted in the 1971 pocket books edition in the USA, where the robotic Iolanthe is represented on the cover in a form more typical of Robert Heinlein or Isaac Asimov novels.

> One day by a Hollywood swimming pool the heavens opened and I suddenly realised that it had been a valid and fruitful experience - us two. We might even have christened the thing love. (Durrell, *Nunquam* 251)

The robot-Iolanthe never experienced any such event and could not have been programmed with knowledge of it. Her Proustian memory, or after the event realization and post-experience of it, is a construct and has no significance as a truth, except in her inner world, if a memory-laden robot may be said to have such. She exemplifies Durrell's playfulness with the temptation to impose coherence or meaning on the mysteries of perception, whether it is self-perception, memory, or sensory perception; all are only percepts and distinctions between them are presumed. They are play, but in their seriousness they make hazardous claims to "truth value."

Importantly, robo-Io's realization of her creation of Self and memory is a stylized Foucauldian insanity. She 'returns' to brothel work, becomes a vicious murderess, is maniacally obsessed with maintaining her independence from her creators, and ultimately commits suicide in the horrific finale. While escaping from Julian, the two fall to the floor of Saint Paul's cathedral during a funeral. In the robotic form, insanity is action contrary to programming, as created by the firm, much like human insanity can be seen as difference from the social program. In robo-Io and Julian's situation, echoing Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*, the death of madness translates directly to the madness of death. Perhaps most telling, Io's 'revolt' (Iolanthe being the titular Aphrodite) is the only fierce and final resistance in the novels. As Dasenbrock notes, "art doesn't revolt; Aphrodite does" ("Lawrence Durrell" 525), and "by the end of the two novels, Aphrodite's revolt has been thoroughly quashed and Merlin's power seems complete" ("Lawrence Durrell" 526). What

Dasenbrock does not point out, however, is that the "deeply ironic" ("Lawrence Durrell" 526) nature of Io's revolt in favour of the 'Self' and Eros (in his analysis) is *mechanical*. The human Iolanthe is long dead from a botched breast augmentation with paraffin wax, and the 'Io in revolt' is merely a robotic resurrection without Eros or a Self, only faulty programming. Io is to Charlock's design pencil, as Charlock is to Durrell's scribbling pen.

Moreover, given Durrell's explicit focus on the indeterminate and multiple nature of the 'Self' in the *Avignon Quintet*, only four years after he finished the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, his bitter renunciation of autonomy stands out as another echo of Nietzsche's influence when mocking 'logicians':

> a thought comes when 'it' wishes and not when 'I' wish, so that it is a falsification of the facts of the case to say that the subject 'I' is the condition of the predicate 'think.' *It* thinks, but that this 'it' is precisely the old famous 'ego' [Ich or 'I'] is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an 'immediate certainty'" (*Beyond Good* 24; emphasis original)

Notably, Io's 'thoughts' (whatever a machine's imagination may be) are without an "I," and her revolt is without will or choice. The bold Aphrodite who, in an exercise of the 'will' and autonomy, breaks away from the automatons in service to the firm, is herself *literally* an automaton. Io, in her every 'choice,' 'memory,' and act of 'will,' reveals the essential lie of "that old famous 'I'" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 83). With Nietzsche's distinctions between 'thought' and 'I,' it follows that "in every act of the will there is a *thought* [not I] which gives commands—and we must not imagine that we can separate this thought out of 'willing' and still have something like the will left!" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 84; emphasis original). With the robotic Io—the only rebel in revolt—'thought' is flawed programming and her 'willing' is not even a Platonic shadow of autonomy. There is no 'Io' or 'I' that can 'will' or be free; there is only the unresolveable 'unknown' we call the Self.

As Trail points out, Durrell emphasizes the pronunciation of *Io*lanthe "as the Spanish 'yo' or the Italian 'io' (both meaning 'I')" (Trail 11). For 'Io,' there are only actions perceived by others and explained by the assumption of an 'I' behind them; for her it should be pedantic to point out that the "old famous 'I' is... only a supposition, an assertion" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 83), yet the reader and characters generally fall back into the old 'error.' Even prior to the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, Durrell points beyond the first stage of the lying senses and the destruction of the 'real' world toward the abandonment of the discrete ego. In *A Key to Modern British Poetry*, he quotes Otto Rank and claims "the modern conflict between the individual and society... might in other ages have been productively surmounted in artistic creation" (72), but in our time introspection is no longer viable. In another mirroring of Nietzsche, Durrell claims the ego/I is an illusion and supports this via another quotation from Groddeck: "the assertion 'I live' only expresses a small superficial part of the total experience 'I am lived by the It [das Es]'" (*Key* 74). To underscore these lessons, his only autonomous character in the *Revolt of Aphrodite*, named 'I,' has an ego made of illusions and wires, teaching the reader that the artist's introspection is equally delusional and amounts to nothing more than a naming or ordering of the mysterious.

Tying together the 'I' and Nietzsche's critique of reason as an interpretive act tied to the body and its instincts is his contention that "'Thinking,' as epistemologists conceive it, simply does not occur: it is a quite arbitrary fiction, arrived at by selecting one element from the process and eliminating all the rest, an artificial arrangement for the purpose of intelligibility" (*Will* 264). Intelligibility has already been set by both Durrell and Nietzsche as a facet of self-preservation and fear. As Nietzsche argues, "the cause-creating drive is... conditioned and excited by the feeling of fear," and also, "to trace something unknown back to something known is alleviating, soothing, gratifying and gives moreover a feeling of power" (*Twilight* 62). In this manner, as with Charlock and the reader who sees Iolanthe as a thinking 'she,' the logicians who posit an "I" because they predicate "think" with the personal pronoun (and hence the Cartesian proof of being) reveal their influence by corporeal instincts and the feeling of fear. Moreover, these same logicians who are mocked in *Beyond Good and Evil* reappear in *The Will to Power* as "grown accustomed to the prejudice that thoughts *cause* thoughts" (Nietzsche, *Will* 264; emphasis original), which is precisely the 'error' the reader encounters in the robot Iolanthe's "reason" and reconstructive "memory."

These problems of identity turn to the 'unknown' identified by both Durrell and Miller. As with Miller, these disruptions of received notions of selfhood turn away from the merely ambiguous and in their epistemological limitations bring the reader to a confrontation with the unknowable—this notion of the Self rests on its unknowability. It exists apart from what it can identify. As with Iolanthe's existence only as a machine that relies on the "old famous [supposition of the] ego" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good* 24) that is "lived by the It" (Durrell, *Key* 74) and "is [nothing] but a reflection projected by the mind machine" (Miller, *Sexus* 209), any notion of Selfhood or character becomes embroiled in locating that which is both intangible but necessary. In this respect, Miller's Mara/Mona and Durrell's Iolanthe/Io reflect their 'unknown.' With regard to the unknown Self, both authors demonstrate this discovery as the uncovering of "a reflection" (Miller, *Sexus* 209), that which is nothing more than "a bundle of splintered mirrors reflecting all the distorted images of other people's minds" (Durrell, *Pied* 241). Yet, the origin of the image reflected and refracted down through in this hall of mirrors remains perpetually intangible, 'unknown.'

SEXUAL AMBIGUITIES AND THE UNKNOWN: UNEXPECTED CONJUGATIONS

> [Tarquin] has discovered that he is a homosexual. After examining his diary, having his horoscope cast, his palm read, his prostate fingered, and the bumps on his great bald cranium interpreted.
>
> 'From now on it is going to be different. I am going to sleep with whom I want and not let my conditioned self interfere with me.... I am that I am, and all that kind of stuff' (Durrell, *Black Book* 167)

i. Teasing Tarquin

Like this ironic resolution of Tarquin's troubles in Durrell's *The Black Book*, which is continually reversed throughout the novel, the flexibility of sexualities and numerous suggestions of homoeroticism, even among the most heterosexual of characters, point to another 'unknown' in Durrell's and Miller's works. In the above epigram, Tarquin discovers his 'true' self that had previously been unknown to him (an idea that should be suspect by now, after my previous chapter)—he discovers his 'allotropic' self can be defined as 'homosexual,' though the reversals disrupt the stability implicit in 'allotropic' or even the existence of a definition.

This term, however, is key. Both Durrell and Miller refer to D. H. Lawrence frequently, invoking his influence on their works, though likewise pointing out their differences, and this notion of the allotrope is one such instance. As a chemical term, allotropic means "having different physical properties, though unchanged in substance" (OED), such as diamonds and coal both being allotropes of carbon. In other words, wildly diverse things are still connected at the level of Lawrence's blood consciousness and relationships are based on neither 'coal' nor 'diamonds' but on 'carbon.' More specifically, in his June 15, 1914 letter to Edward Garnett, Lawrence claimed:

> You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the same single radically-unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond – but I say 'diamond, what! This is carbon.' And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.) (Lawrence, *Letters* 183)

This famous passage is not lost on Durrell and Miller, especially given their shared interest in the censored 'dirt' of what Lawrence tactfully calls 'soot.' To the point, this passage's *topic* illustrates area where Durrell's and Miller's extension and develpment from their predecessors is most apparent: the old stable ego. In 1932, Miller wrote his study of Lawrence, *The World of Lawrence* (published in 1980) contemporaneously with Anais Nin's *D. H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study*. Durrell, in contrast, was outside the trend in the Villa Seurat, and did not pen a study *per se* of Lawrence, but he did write a preface to Bantam's 1968 edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (vii-xi), and as early at 1936 he wrote to Alan Thomas (his friend and he editor of Durrell's *Spirit of Place*): "it is a qualitative difference in which I blow the Lawrentian trumpet. I [know?] my own kind, I haven't begun.

Beside Lawrence, beside Miller, beside Blake. Yes, I am humble, I have hardly started. BUT I AM ON THE SAME TRAM" (*Spirit* 50).

Ian MacNiven has already used Durrell's comments in the passage above to illustrate the relationship between Durrell's, Miller's, and Lawrence's works in his "Lawrence and Durrell: 'ON THE SAME TRAM'," and this is an established element of the criticism. Nonetheless, sharing transit to the same station should not lead us to disregard the "qualitative difference" in how they all play a new tune on the bugle of the novel—this difference resides in the continuity of the allotropic self in contrast to the "warring *selves*" Durrell identifies when placing Miller beside Lawrence ("Studies" 49; emphasis mine). Lawrence's use of the term "allotropic" derives from two footnotes in F. W. H. Myers' *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (Gibons 338-341), and it is this "'subliminal self' which represents 'our *central* and *abiding* being'" (Gibbons 339; emphasis mine). Lawrence promoted what appears to be another frame for the immortal soul, which Durrell and Miller both back away from, though to differing degrees, even if they are not fully successful in totally ridding themselves of "the old stable ego" (Lawrence, *Letters* 183). The continuity of at least the drive, if not an actual self *per se*, is where Durrell and Miller break from their forebears—if a drive remains for Durrell and Miller, it is divorced from a central and abiding being.

Most notably, Durrell and Miller both frequently work by omission, such as the gaps in Miller's Grecian cave, but Durrell employs allusion and omission in a more systematic manner. As with the epigrams to each novel of *The Alexandria Quartet*, the omitted materials surrounding the quoted portions of the epigrams are of the utmost importance (Skordili "Author and the Demiurge" 8-9; Alexandre-Garner, *Le Quatuor* 26). I discuss these epigrams in more detail later in this chapter, but the relationship between the epigrams and the novels they open is only apparent when they are treated allusively, when the excised materials are restored from the original. This is a gap that can be filled, unlike most, but the cynosure is that same as the 'unknown.' This same pattern repeats in Durrell's book of criticism, based on his lectures through the British Council in Argentina, where Lawrence is taken as an epigram to the chapter "THE WORLD WITHIN":

> You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, which needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise. (Durrell, *Key* 45)

The reference to allotropic states of the self is what operates, in Skordili's conception of this pattern, under erasure; however, Durrell's point in his own works seems instead to be the steady erasure of the ego itself. It may stand in via its absence, yet this is not quite the same thing as claiming a fluctuating though allotropic form for the ego. Durrell also is explicit when he notes

> Even in D. H. Lawrence, the surface of whose prose still reflected the order of traditional methods, we can see an attempt to grasp a new attitude to the ego.... and add that he is following his characters through 'allotropic states' to establish not how the act but what they are, essentially. (Durrell, *Key* 63; quoting Lawrence, *Letters* 183)

It is this "essentially" where the distinction lies: Durrell contends "Modern literature offers us no Continuities" (*Balthazar* 5). Even this statement is discontinuous, appearing in his Note to only one of the variants he created of *Balthazar* by changing the book between each edition (sometimes even reversing previous changes). Furthermore, this whole note is, like the ego in Durrell's works, likewise under erasure. In the omnibus edition of *The Alexandria Quartet*, just as in the Lawrentian and Freudian epigrams, this "Note" to *Balthazar* is erased. Its remnant still suggests interpretationss for the inquisitive reader, but it suggests that the allotropic Self, if such a thing exists, will always be somewhere in the shadow of what stands in its place. I must have an intermediary that keeps it perpetually hidden, if it exists at all.

As an example of this difference between Durrell and Lawrence, Tarquin's sense of his sexual identity (in my own epigram here) stands out as an allusive and slippery example. This discovery of homosexuality as the 'carbon' on which Tarquin's diamond or coal is based, is drawn from another character's analyses of writings, celestial objects, and physiognomy, rather than on any actual discovery of a 'self,' let alone the nature of such a thing and its assumed stability. This sexual self-identity is clearly not where one would tend to look for it if it is to be found at all. It is also not without the character's parapraxis of "interfere with," in its slang meaning of sexual assault or molestation, which suggests that the social mores Tarquin rejects are still very much with him in an uncomfortable way.

As I have already noted in the last chapter, with Nietzsche's rethinking of the Cartesian 'cogito ergo sum' into "a thought comes when 'it' wishes and not when 'I' wish," we find that "the old famous 'ego' [Ich or 'I'] is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an 'immediate certainty.' (*Beyond Good* 24). In the context of my discussion of selfhood, I use this passage to suggest that the self is not where it is most often sought, in thought, just as it is not in the socio-sexual places where Tarquin seeks it. His sexuality is no more a fixed 'selfhood' than the prostate, horoscope, and bumps on his head are factors that determine his sexuality. The satiric tone of this passage, and the later revocation of Tarquin's decision (Tarquin's 'authentic' sexuality remains forever provisional in the novel), ties it to Tarquin's role as a comic character: a sad clown. Moreover, their interference with the tie between sexuality and identity points to a common thread in both Durrell's and Miller's novels: sexual identities are ambiguous, fluid, and defy the reader's anticipations, even when directly described or defined, though they are most frequently undescribed and go without names. When they remain unnamed, when sexuality cannot be an adjective an identity, they are an instance of the 'unknown,' a gap.

In the context of the rigid assumptions of sexual identities that are implicit in the strict binary categorization of 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' (and likewise for the reader's heterosexist presumption, which I will demonstrate is predominant in criticism), Durrell and Miller render the unknown 'known' by using pre-existing erotic stereotypes and identities to discuss that which is indeterminate or continuously subject to revision. However, by doing so they disturbs the same stereotypes and familiarities that typically constitute an act of 'knowing' by overlapping their boundaries. A reader might argue that indeterminate sexuality implies an unnamed option: bisexuality. However, the implicitness of bisexuality is also a projection. While a third title that unifies this binary may be coined, Durrell specifically does not invoke it—the absence of this word where it might otherwise be appropriate characterizes both Durrell's and Miller's ouevre.

Furthermore, Durrell leaves this binary ambiguous—Tarquin's position is never resolved into an 'either/or' or even 'both' but rather remains a gap that challenges the contents that are brought to it by the reader (assuming the gap is prominent enough to prompt the reader to return to it and recognize its absence). Tarquin tells the narrator of *The Black Book* "[I will] not let my conditioned self *interfere* with me" (167; emphasis mine), and the desire behind his object choice continues to produce symptoms (Freudian parapraxes, the faulty function or slip that reveals something else beyond the intended meaning) that indicate its focus and fount lie elsewhere. 'Interfering,' as a codeword for homosexual molestation or assault, now becomes masturbatory as he interferes with himself. This parapraxis not only reinforces monosexuality (though a constantly shifting monosexuality) but also humorously suggests a narcissistic basis for Tarquin's homosexuality, which is not surprising given Durrell's interest in Freud. This, then, suggests that even the claim for an allotropic self in sexuality is undermined in the hint of Tarquin being a pseudohomosexual, which again further disturbs stable terms and contributes to the proliferation of shifting adjectives.

Moreover, this precariousness in the text prompts the reader's self-reflection on the acts caught up with reading, and self-reflexivity likewise provokes him or her to realize that such projected knowledge must be arbitrarily constructed and hence does not codify any self-identity that might be regarded as intrinsic, let alone somehow 'authentic' or stable.

The stability of Tarquin's self and the sexual identity tied to it derives from the reader's additions to the ambiguous and polysignifying text. Even if this is regarded as the reader's own parapraxis (choosing from among the ambiguous readings), such acts in reading leave the Lawrentian 'allotropic' self at a remove.

This set of circumstances continues. By giving the reader what she or he set out to find, Miller and Durrell expose the necessarily 'unknown' element of the 'familiar.' Discrete sexual identities are a particularly rich instance of this exposure. They surface in both direct discourse and more slyly concealed insinuations, word plays, and *double entendres*, which stylistically mimic the perpetually shifting nature of the imposed identities such language points to. However, while it is arguable that identities are necessarily imposed—perhaps by the nature of language itself—both Durrell and Miller specifically avoid using any language that defines these indeterminacies. Adjectives defining sexual identity, other than epithets, are extremely rare in their works, and in the case of Tarquin, no such identity is consistently imposed by the text. This aporia is the 'unknown'—that which is absent from the text but necessary to it and constructed in the reader's reading. In this case, when 'homosexual' finally arrives as a term because Tarquin "has discovered that he is a homosexual" (*Black Book* 167), it is undermined in the same breath and is eventually contradicted. Whatever adjective adheres to Tarquin, it remains invisible while those that appear are immediately destabilized.

Due to this aporia, the 'familiar' and presumably 'real' stereotypes become ever stranger and illusory. As Durrell points out, "we say that X is a Theosophist or a Bergsonian: but it would be very difficult to criticize his work entirely in terms of either proposition" ("Studies" 47), and the same limitations are actively invoked by both his and Miller's texts against such propositions as 'heterosexual' or 'homosexual.' Durrell's and Miller's novels destabilize 'heterosexual' or 'homosexual' as distinct, codified identities that they refuse to offer in discretely discriminated forms. The issue at stake is that these terms associated with identity are destabilized in general in these authors' texts. A reader may impose a lexicon, but the text itself does not allow it.

ii. Queer(ing) Miller

As an example of one reader's imposition of such rigid classification based on what a given reader expected to find, Elisabeth Ladenson describes Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* as a body of "work that surely offer[s] the most impeccable straight [heterosexual] male credentials" (418) in her attempt to consider the "universally acknowledged [truth] that a heterosexual man in search of entertainment will want to watch women have sex" (417). Her reading is adroit and her allusion to Austen is successful in destabilizing the heteronormative ideal of which Mr. Darcy is the prime example. Yet, on the basis of the explicit content of the Miller's novel itself, the a reader who is attentive to the explicit statements of the text cannot accept her initial contention that Miller's first published novel is the most "impeccabl[y]" (417) heterosexual text available. Ladenson's two statements are no more true than Austen's famous first sentence, though the ironic element of the narrator of *Pride and Prejudice* stands out more convincingly, while Ladenson's remains humourous but not ironic. Miller playfully challenges the rigidity of such identities as "straight," "gay," or "lesbian," although he does so indirectly, which makes the palpable instances of homoeroticism and homosexuality surprisingly difficult to perceive for many readers, while illustrates my previous comment on the reader's heterosexist presumption.

As the strongest example of this often-overlooked element of Miller's texts, the narrating Miller's interaction with his friend Van Norden[89] in *Tropic of Cancer* is complex and suggestive during the 'quintessentially' heterosexual activity of engaging a prostitute. Following the rather unambiguous 'seduction' (or more accurately the purchasing) of this prostitute and her copulation with Van Norden, Miller's interaction with Van Norden is contrastingly rich and playful. Where she and Van Norden are described mechanistically and without overt ambiguity in the language of actions and positions (there is only irony in the cruel veneer of sexual titillation that covers the ingenuous pleasure of purchasing the prostitute), Miller revives the erotic tension of language's overt and covert meanings when he describes his relationship to his male friend. The reader is told "The girl is lying on the edge of the bed and Van Norden is bent over her like a satyr with his two feet solidly planted on the floor" (141), and, separated by a paragraph that delays the reader's perspective on the visual image of the space occupied in the scene, Miller is "down on [his] knees behind Van Norden" (142). Moreover, Miller is "tickling him in the rump" (142), which calls attention back to his "sticking one's finger into the Unknown, as you say—because I might bring up something horrible, *the truth*" (Durrell, "Studies" 47). In response, Van Norden "grunts," "Leave me alone.... I almost got it in that time" (142). This disturbs the uncomplicated physical descriptions and implies no intercourse has occurred (with the exception of Miller's digital interference with Van Norden), and heterosexual intercourse has not happened *in the text*. No such claim is made in this scene, and the presence of intercourse (or at least heterosexual intercourse) is the reader's assumption or reading but not a stated event in the novel, much like Miller's penetration of and exit from the cave in Mycenae. That this homoeroticism has been both overlooked and denied by every critic who has discussed homosexuality in Miller's works can only be explained by heterosexist presumption.

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[89] Durrell clearly saw the significance of the character, choosing to name his sailboat while on Corfu "the Van Norden" (MacNiven 134) and using the pseudonym Charles Norden for his second novel, *Panic Spring*, as well as for shorter works in *The Booster*, *Delta*, and for "Obituary Notice" in *Night and Day*.

In the most (ironically) heterosexual of all possible associations, this grunt from Van Norden, who is bent like a satyr in front of the kneeling Miller, "suddenly brings to [Miller's] mind, for the second time, the remembrance of [his] dream" about Van Norden's penis (142). Where the language relating to the sexual encounter with the prostitute is relatively dry and plainly descriptive with regard to physical actions, as perhaps suits the pornographic lack of metaphor, the descriptions of Van Norden return Miller to his evocative prose, rich with ambiguities and oddities of word choice that undermine any reductive reading of the text. During the heterosexual domination of a woman by economic power, realized in the form of sexual domination, Miller is "on [his] knees *behind* Van Norden...., tickling him *in* the rump" (142; emphasis mine). The overtones (if such could even be a 'tone') of sodomy in the physical positioning (which is disturbed by interruptions that obscure the overall description) and the sexual arousal of another implicit in 'tickling' another man 'in' his body subverts the heteronormative pornographic narrative with a subtext of homosexuality, homoeroticism, double meanings, and the more traditional language games of eroticism coupled with the face of innocence (the eroticism of the double entendre). The erotic is in the playfulness of the language, its ambiguities, the possibility of (but not actual enticement to) alternate readings or readings that subvert the heteronormative reputation (facade) of the text. The 'unknown' toward which the erotic turns the reader's attention, is a gap, which contrasts against the "mechanical" nature of the 'straight' descriptions.

More importantly, this establishes a peculiar situation where readers of Miller's novel come into conflict with the text while simultaneously censoring it—this is quite literally the case. As an author who has become popularly elided with exuberant heterosexuality (this is clearly where Kate Millet locates Miller), it is odd to discover the 'pornographic' reader encounters Miller and cannot find the less overt implications in the language (though the passage cited above can only barely be described as having *covert* homoerotic content, bordering as it does on explicit sodomy). In contrast, the 'literary' reader (at least the reader in established criticism) is apparently unable to read this virtually explicit content and instead favours far more tenuous readings in order to find homoeroticism in a Bloomian 'strong' queering of the text, however much Bloom might blush at such a notion. Those who would 'queer' Miller do so only by overlooking the already explicit contents of the text.

These instances also seem especially invisible to those critics who are ostensibly actively looking for them when performing a queer reading. Specifically, overtly homoerotic content is somehow buffered in the act of reading the text 'straight.' Also, given the broad trend in Miller and Durrell scholarship toward biographical readings, it is worth emphasizing that my queer reading does *not* rely on biographical essentialisms in making this argument.

Even Michael Hardin, who otherwise ignores the distinction between narrator and author and even the overt content of the text, makes the very deliberate argument in his "Fighting Desires: Henry Miller's Queer *Tropic*" that "none of [his project in performing a queer reading of *Tropic of Cancer*] is to argue that Miller is not homophobic and sexist—Miller very clearly was" (129). While the biographical nature of this claim is open to speculation and requires evidence, the textual element overlooks Miller's frequent irony with regard to his role as a pornographer or erotic writer. The importance of this distinction between irony in the text and Miller's actual life (distinct from his narrator's) derives from the predominance of a dissolution of the distinction in Miller scholarship: it is more often true than not that critics fail to distinguish between the author and the narrator, or even the author and the text, such as in all the Miller biographies. Given the broad prevalence of this trend, my counter-position should be made quite clear. Miller's narrative voice is often ironic and cannot be reductively seen as autobiographical. All of this is to say, if these texts use this particular ambiguity or aporia (sexual identity) to trouble stable, essential identities in general, then the instances where these identities are imposed contribute to the disruption of the thing they propose—it becomes an ironic heteronormativity, and via this disruption, an ironic autonomous self.

With regard to previous criticism that has noted the homoerotic (or homosexual) *connotations* of Miller's work, these fairly direct scenes are tellingly overlooked in favour of close examinations of potentially connotative language that requires a greater stretch of the interpretive imagination. Exemplifying the 'literary' reader above, who censors the explicit content in favour of the covert, Michael Hardin (who firmly places Miller as homophobic), proposes that a variety of loosely suggestive language choices point to the homoerotics of any sexual relationship, in line with Sedgewick's rereading of presumably heterosexual texts in *Between Men* and *Epistemology of the Closet*. In order for Hardin's argument to hold up under scrutiny, the homoerotic elements of *Tropic of Cancer* must be indirect, indicating the "subconscious... as a space for locating desire" (Hardin 130).[90] Excluding this elision of the subconscious with the unconscious, I propose something different and, moreover, something in line with Hardin's later republication of the article as a modified chapter in his book *Playing the Reader: The Homoerotics of Self-Reflexive Fiction*. Miller's homoerotic and homosocial descriptions are not simply 'sublimated' elements in the text that indicate repression or denial (in part because a text does not have a consciousness, let alone an unconscious, as Hardin argues[91]). Instead, these moments of 'repression' in Hardin's estimation rely on the epistemological closet of heterosexist assumption wherein Miller's role as the "impeccabl[y]" (Ladenson 417) heterosexual novelist effectively negates the rather direct homoerotic elements of his descriptions. This is a tactic that Gay and Lesbian studies generally attempt to undermine rather than re-inscribe. More explicitly, in Miller's case, the 'unconscious' and 'sublimated' homoeroticism can only be seen as such if we, the readers, are willing to repress the overt homosexual content; hence, this approach is only valid if we forcefully impose the closet of heterosexist assumption on the novel, contrary to startlingly overt evidence. Instead, I approach the text more openly and include its explicit content as well as noting its aporia: the unknown.

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[90] Even though I am dismissing this reading, I should clarify its specific meaning. While I reject the possibility that a text can have an unconscious or be open to the psychoanalytic process of making the unconscious conscious, Hardin's intent is more specifically inclined toward a metaphorical sense of this interaction. While a text does not have an unconscious, it does clearly have meanings that do not lie on the surface of the language; this is the realm of the ironical, the metaphorical, the symbolic, and so forth. These elements of a given creative and/or fictional text cannot be overlooked, and much like the analytic situation between the analyst and analysand, approaching this content relies on in some sense rejecting the surface meaning as being the totality of the statement.

Such statements 'mean what they say' only insofar as 'what they say' includes the reader's awareness of connotation, social context, the potential for homonyms supplying alternative meanings, ironic tone, metaphoric fusion, and so forth. These literary elements comprise the unconscious of the text, or the "subconscious" as Hardin calls it (130). Therefore, the reader who is "locating desire" (Hardin 130) in the unconscious of the text seems to be fallaciously prone to overlooking overt content to the same extent that the 'pornographic' reader avoids literariness. His parapraxis reveals his presumption of heteronormativity. If the "exploration of the unknown yields only the known" (Durrell, "Studies" 89), then this unknown resembles the unconscious of the text that becomes reconizable as the censored materials.

The difficulty in this body of criticism, as demonstrated by Hardin and Ladenson, is not being able to see the forest through the trees. This means that Hardin's and Ladenson's inability to see the explicitly homoerotic content and their project to find censored contents are reflections of the imposed closet of heterosexist assumption as described by Sedgewick. In order to avoid considering the directly homoerotic overtones of the text, Hardin performs a close reading of certain obscure moments where the language is open to creative readings that require a keen attentiveness from the reader. With an imaginative flair beyond what would seem tasteful for a reader, Hardin points out that Miller comments three times on semi-colons while his narrator is working as a proofreader, and continues to note

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[91] This is to say, the presence of homoeroticism in the 'unconscious' or non-explicit, literary elements of the text does not necessarily indicate any form of censorship – such a reading would enact carrying the analogy of the text to the analysand too far.

> the colon as well as the anus represent a Rabelaisian focus on the alimentary canal; although the colon is not the same as the anus, its proximity and the breadth of meaning inherent in Rabelasian images allow for readings which can be related to food, excrement and sex. ("Fighting Desires" 144)

Much like his transformation of punctuation into sodomy, Hardin reads Miller's description of Moldorf's continually talking or eating mouth and notes:

> The mouth is sensual and Miller's fixation on it suggests a subtextual reading which permits the bringing together of speech and oral sensuality and pleasure (eating, kissing, fellatio). Sex and speech are so closely allied in this novel that one cannot ignore making the connection. ("Fighting Desires" 142).

Again, while Hardin's reading is imaginative and plays with the text (good qualities taken to an exaggerated extreme here), it requires a greater interpretive 'stretch' from the reader than the more direct descriptions Miller gives of sexual scenes and the emotional tensions between the male characters. In fact, Hardin overlooks all relatively direct homoerotic scenes in the novel in favour of those that can only be read as homoerotic via the assumption that such eroticism must be repressed (presumably by an author who is not fully aware of what he writes, but is nonetheless revealed by his writing's contents).[92]

As the most immediately apprehensible instance of this uncertainly, and in contrast to the accusations of homophobia that are traditionally aimed at Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, the first paragraphs of the novel find the narrator (named Henry Miller) shaving his friend Boris' armpits, even after which his "itching did not stop" (23). Miller then comments: "We might never have known each other so intimately, Boris and I, had it not been for the lice" (23), and these lice echo Donne's flea, providing the vehicle exchange between the two, although this places Boris as the lover. However, whatever the nature of Boris' "itch," "known" and "intimately" are sexually connotative words for Miller to choose in the opening page of his novel, especially when applied to a male character in a homosocial relationship with the narrator. For a novel often viewed as heterosexual pornography (as evidenced forcefully in its famous censorship), this introduction disturbs the reader's imposition of discrete and anticipated definitions of sexuality.

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[92] While readings that assume the ability to analyse the repressed contents of an author's psyche are common enough in psychoanalytic readings, I do find it an intriguing problem that this mechanical approach to the text requires that the reader abandons the safety of a mechanical reading in favour of one that aims for highly creative, radical expansions of the text's content. To fulfill the structure of psychoanalyzing the author, the reader must actively take up a highly inventive approach to the text that greatly emphasizes the agency of the reader rather than the role of the author in defining content.

Furthermore, after half of the novel's erotic (and apparently heterosexual) adventures, Boris reappears through a letter where he writes:

> 'What happened between us—at any rate, as far as I go—is that you touched me, touched my life, that is, at the one point where I am still alive: my death. By the emotional flow I went through another immersion. I lived again, alive. No longer by reminiscence, as I do with others, but alive.' (161)

Boris' motivation is unclear, but the language of these two scenes surrounding Boris is suggestive, with the first being sexually connotative and this second passage (above) being metaphorical. The language here is even more homoerotic than the intimacy of the bond between the two men arising from the lice that bring them together. 'Something' "happened between [them]" that involves Boris being "touched" by the narrator "at the one point where [he is] still alive" (161). To render the metaphoric literal, this event would seemingly refer to the arm-pit shaving during de-lousing, which would normally involve the removal of infested clothing, and after which Boris still 'itched.' This unpacking soon becomes important in light of critic's oversights of direct statements, such as the overtly homosexual content to which I have already referred.

Nevertheless, given Miller's frequent contention that it is his sex life that is the point at which he is still alive, while he is otherwise 'dead,' his touching of Boris at the point where *he* is still alive shows a homoerotic tension that undercuts the superficially ardent heterosexuality of the text: the ardent heterosexuality that Miller is customarily described by critics as exemplifying. Moreover, Boris not only describes being touched, but also as having been immersed because of "the emotional flow" associated with what "happened between" between himself and the narrating Miller (161). An immersion does not imply being penetrated, but rather, penetrating something else, being immersed in it, whether it is the baptismal water of the river or another rebirth into a new notion or construction of selfhood.

In line with the connotative and metaphoric language of this passage, the typical reader's anticipations of a particular sexual identity in the narrator (ie: heterosexist presumption) is subverted through the ambiguity that surrounds Miller's descriptions of his relationships with other expatriates in Paris. As with the previous discussion of locale, this places the reader in the awkward position of creating meaning from an unresolved ambiguity; hence, any resolution made by the reader is again a reflection of what he or she set out to find. This is to say, at the moments of greatest heterosexist presumption, the text does not fulfil the expectation—this is particularly so with regard to the erotic nature of the novel and its publication in its first edition with the phallic stamp of the Obelisk Press on its opening page and the spine. Miller subverts the scene with ambiguities that suggest a sexuality or sexual identity that dare not speak its name and yet is somehow beyond that which is typically expected from the text: that it is the most impeccably straight male" text available to Ladenson (418).

For instance, when the narrating Miller and Van Norden (another character with whom the narrator has a homosocial relationship in the novel) hire a Parisian prostitute, the masturbatory or pornographic reader expects the coupling commonly found in such novels, or at least as is found in novels typically sold as pornography by a pornographic publisher with a stylized erect phallus imprinted on the title page of all imprints. Miller even notes this type of reader in his opening to *The World of Sex*:

> The readers of my books fall usually into two distinct classes – those who are disgusted by the strong element of sexuality and those who rejoice in discovering that this element forms such a large ingredient.... In the latter group are some who have no patience at all with what they choose to call my "classic" side [read: "literary"]. (5)

When I refer to the 'pornographic reader' I mean this kind of reader: one who is primarily attracted to Miller's works for sexual excitement.[93] This is also a topic of discussion between Durrell and Miller in their letters,[94] but to the point, instead of smoothly satisfying such a reader by offering up an uncomplicated series of sexual descriptions, descriptions aimed primarily at titillation rather than disturbing the reader's easy consumption of the text, Miller offers up a cruel representation of the prostitute's trade through his ironic depiction of the exchange.[95] It is based on the mechanistic function of capitalist exchange: "We haven't any passion either of us.... But there's the fifteen francs and something has to be done about it" (Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* 140). In fact, the "fifteen francs" even comes to replace human lust and sexual desire; "the fifteen francs is [sic] like the primal cause" (140). Even the sex act becomes "a machine whose cogs have slipped...., inhuman" (141) rather than something with "a spark of passion" (140).

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[93] There is, of course, the possibility of the reader who is attracted to both elements of the text, the 'pornographic' and the 'classic'; however, Miller does not account for this possibility and I would find it unlikely that those who object to his literariness could comprise such a group. While I do not exclude the role that such a reader might play, nor the possibility for a reader to move between these two categories, we can move the argument forward by provisionally accepting all those who read for his 'classic' side as being interested in literariness and all those who read for the strong element of sexuality while rejecting literary elements as 'pornographic' readers.

[94] Referring to the scene with the Parisian prostitute, Durrell mocks a reader who "writes that *Tropic* 'cheapens dirt.'.... Puzzled him, did *Tropic*. It wasn't just smut as he'd hoped. He'[d]… got the idea you were even hotter than *Daffodil*," a pornographic novel by Cecil Barr (*Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller: A Private* 12).

Oddly, even this overt distinction drawn by the narrator between mechanized sex as exchange and the humanity of passions is troubled by Miller's use of "whose" to describe an "inhuman" machine, which would properly be a "that," which anthropomorphises the machine into a person rather than a thing, hence underscoring the dehumanizing nature of the situation. A further element that undercuts this 'pornographic' moment in the text and disturbs the potential for an accurate reading by the pornographic reader is the ambiguity that Miller adds to what should be relatively direct description. If the pornographic can be loosely defined against the erotic based on its degree of engagement with ambiguity, irony, multivalence, complex use of metaphor and simile, or other such 'literary' devices (the erotic being more literary and the pornographic less), then Miller undoes his pornography by allowing for a great deal of ambiguity and plurisignation. This happens at the moments when the pornographic reader would anticipate such elements being largely absent. This lends an element of the 'unknown' into Miller's most directly anatomical pornographic description, and hence undercuts the domination via 'knowing' that the pornographic enacts. So long as irony and ambiguity are integral elements of the text, Miller's pornographic reader is caught in a bind of censoring the contents of the text in order to avoid that which he or she "ha[s] no patience at all with" (Miller, *World of Sex* 5).

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[95] The presence of irony in this depiction of the heteronormative exchange with the prostitute would seem to preclude the 'pornographic' reader from consuming this passage without in some way censoring the irony from his or her reading. Unlike the conditions under which the novel was originally published—censored, banned, and smuggled to readers—pornographic texts without this 'literary' irony are easily available and are not under censorship, which surely influences the modern reader's sense of Miller's text.

More to the point here, there is a voyeuristic element to the scene that mirrors the 'pornographic' reader's titillation in reading the erotic prose of Miller's novel (a titillation that is bought at the cost of not reading and of actively censoring the overt content of the novel, or in other words, finding what one set out to find rather than what is explicitly written). Specifically, Miller is watching Van Norden "tackle her" (141), which reflects the expected mechanical approach to a pornographic scene (carefully enumerated, defined by class and type, and reduced to physical properties). Moreover, his watching is akin to the reader's 'watching' of a mechanically described sex act that would satisfy a reader who "rejoice[s] in discovering" "the strong element of sexuality" while concomitantly "hav[ing] no patience at all with" literary contents such as irony or ambiguity (Miller, *World of Sex* 5). Suggestively, Miller notes the lack of passion and that "As long as that spark of passion is missing there is no human significance in the performance" (142; emphasis mine), implying that the same human significance is absent from a reader who is without passion in his or her reading (ie: without literariness). Naturally, he concludes that "It needs the touch of a human hand to set it right" (142), which seems reminiscent of the matter-of-fact tone prevalent in the initiation scenes or unexpected sexual events in earlier sexually-charged novels like *Gynecocracy* (1893) or *Fanny Hill* (1749). This "human hand" that will set things right, however, is the authorial hand, not the narrator's, and its creative intervention in the scene through complexities of language and tone. Moreover, this authorial hand disturbs Miller's pornographic reader's anticipation (and pornographic reading) of the heterosexual emphasis of the scene.

Hardin argues, and I agree, that "sex and language are once again united by Miller" ("Fighting Desires" 142), and it is the relationship between sex and inventive language that is most interesting. All three of the homoerotic scenes I describe are verbally inventive, offering up male-male sexual imagery only in a playful and complex manner (there is not much veiling or extensive creativity required of the reader in order to find a homoerotic element, despite the difficulties critics have experienced). In fact, I agree with both Ladenson and Hardin in their specifics and creative interpretations—it is only in what they choose *not* to discuss that their positions must be expanded.

Furthermore, and still in this telling context of biography, Mary Dearborn, one of Miller's biographers, argues that Miller had homosexual experiences in his early youth (31, 34), based on his description of "buggering" and being "buggered" by his childhood friend Joey (Miller, *Henry Miller's Book* 43):

> We all three slept in one big bed. Joey and I had acquired the habit of buggering one another. We thought nothing of it, but to "Turk," as we had nicknamed Tony, we were committing a grievous sin. Sometimes we tried to bugger him, but it was useless -- he was incorruptible. (Miller, *Henry Miller's Book* 43)

While Dearborn does acutely point out that Miller "name[d] his son Tony and rename[d] all his best friends Joey" (31), I do not make the same kind of argument as she does. The accuracy of this childhood recollection, the imposed naming of any such events, or the potential charge of latent homosexuality (as some have informally argued of Miller) does not necessarily have a bearing on the homoeroticism that demonstrably pervades the language of Miller's texts. As Laura Kipnis argues,

> fantasy, identification, and pleasure don't necessarily immediately follow assigned gender: for instance, straight women may get turned on by gay male porn or may identify with the male in a heterosexual coupling. (103)

Similarly, this focus on the homoerotics of *Tropic of Cancer* is based in this discontinuity between the assumption of heteronormativity (which is Kipnis' intent in referring to "assigned gender") and the fantastic, identificatory, and pleasing elements of verbal play that are demonstrably present in the text. Apart from gender identities, which carry their own set of essentialist presumptions (biographical or biological), the same argument follows for sexual identities that do not allow for continual revisions, vacillations, and provisionalities, as they are given by Durrell and Miller.

All of this is because codified notions of sexual preference—heterosexuality or homosexuality (and other titled variations)—do not necessarily represent sexual actions, thoughts, desires, textual allusions, or even the absence of these things. So, if sexual identity as a descriptor is to be divorced from desire and acts (just as textual depictions, such as explicit descriptions, may be separated by a reader from the playfulness of puns, allusions, and so forth), then on what basis can it be a meaningful description of some assumed intrinsic mode of being? It seems more plausible that this is like Russell's paradox of sets/classes, which is concerned with those sets that are not members of themselves: "For instance, the set of horses is not a member of itself since it is not a horse, whereas the set of non-horses is a member of itself. Is the set of all sets which are not members of themselves, a member of itself? If it is then it is not. If it is not then it is" (*Dictionary of Philosophy* 309).

The implication, or at least one of the potential implications, is that if such a paradox is a necessary part of the nature of sets, then 'sets' must be an artificial construction that misinterprets the world. Thus, the sexual classifications Miller plays with must be likewise inaccurate or insufficient because they come into conflict. In this context, if imposed identities (labels) are not necessarily tied to acts or desires but rather to some assumed-though-unverifiable and essential identity, they can then be more accurately described as pointing to the constructed nature of the classifications themselves, rather than to any 'intrinsic' or 'real' conflict or paradox.

As noted, Miller was aware of the distinctions between the types of readers his novel attracted (the 'classical' and the 'pornographic,' to use the terms loosely); the textual moments that appear to be manipulations of the pornographic reader's attentions in the novel likewise manipulate the reader's heterosexist presumption. Hardin and Ladenson both offer up such an assumption of the novel, and hence are unable to perceive the disturbingly overt references to homoerotic desire, even while demonstrating great abilities to find such language in more arcane instances. They are correct to assert the existence of a homoerotic element to the text, the problem exists in a matter of degree—for their position to be effective, we must ignore Miller's digital probing of Van Norden and instead focus on repressed erotics in the verbal texture. Yet, such erotic elements can hardly be seen as repressed when the overt content of the text puts forward the same materials.

Hence, the 'unknown' of sexual ambiguity and the disruptions of stable notions of identity—both replete with provisionalities, deferrals, and hesitations—now appear as self-reflexive tools whereby the text disturbs the reader's easy acceptance of a platter proffering his or her readerly expectation. While the tender topic of authorial intention is not what is at stake in this scenario, we are still left with the *reader's* intentionality (and assumptions) as a determining factor in the reading experience, such that the reader is able to discover only what he or she set out to find. No text is without its influences on its reader, but the reader is demonstrably able to read according to his or her assumptions regardless of the overt contents of the text. Nonetheless, the reader's freedom to create the text in his or her own image is marred by the text's ability to disturb the reader's easy acceptance of the anticipated finding or to offer up what the reader "set out to find" in a disturbingly exact way that subverts the nature of the expectation. This includes sexual content that increasingly works against the reader's assumptions. In other words, although the reader can only bring to the novel what he or she already has, the text has the capacity to disturb these previously held assumptions and stereotypes.

Furthermore, these disruptions prompt the reader's recognition that his or her own exploration of the unknown yields only the known, and when that which the reader has set out to find (such as heterosexual imagery) is offered, it is rendered in such a way that, in its dissatisfaction, it drives the reader to recognize the 'straw man' of his or her argument. In this way, the 'unknown' becomes the guiding star of the cynosure. In finding Van Norden penetrating a prostitute, the text reminds the reader that Van Norden 'cannot get it in' and that Miller is 'tickling him *in* his rump,' which converts the tendered heterosexual exchange into an ironic tribute to the reader's anticipations compounded with a contradiction of "what [the reader] set out to find" (89). That so many readers could accept finding "what [they] set out to find" in an unquestioning manner, such as Hardin and Ladenson show, simply reinforces the extent of the heterosexist presumption that surrounds Miller's works, veiling its overt statements, and therefore the importance in recognizing how the texts actively subvert such imposed readings as well.

A pregnant kinship also exists between the penetrations implicit in these two scenes from *Tropic of Cancer* and the quotation from *Sexus* that opens the previous chapter. While neither Van Norden nor Boris are described as "penetrable" (Miller, *Sexus* 210), penetration is their ticklish or itching subject, respectively (though not with respect). While the language of penetration is embedded in the descriptions of the two male characters—Boris is immersed in the narrating Miller (penetrating) and Van Norden is tickled *in* the rump (penetrated)—it is absent from Miller's descriptions of the prostitute, even while Van Norden is "bent over her like a satyr" (Miller, *Tropic* 142) with Miller "watching their movements" (142), none of which overtly or even suggestively gestures to penetration.

Much like the description of Mona/Mara that begins the previous chapter (she is impenetrable), the description of Van Norden, even in the act of copulation, does represent his as able to penetrate the young Parisian prostitute, and in contradiction to the actions he is described as engaged in, he snaps at the narrating Miller, "'I almost got it in that time'" (142), which suggests he is either impotent or physical penetration is not the matter at hand. In fact, this seems to be very much the subtext of the entire scene, with Miller comparing the mechanical purchase of sex to "one of those crazy machines which throws the newspaper out, millions and billions and trillions of them" (142). This machine acts as a phallus ejaculating white newsprint (and in contrast to the broken machinery, this machine is a "which" and not a 'who'). The same ejaculatory imagery comes in the "volcano erupting" (142), the soldier with a "knife or gun" (141), and even the "fifteen francs" (140) that displace the "primal cause of things" (140). Because Van Norden is so intent not to "let her work on [his] sympathies" (140), she is impenetrable, with penetration standing in for a form of human contact (anathema to the pornographic reader's pleasure). Instead, both discrete persons remain unknowns to each other, separated by their phenomenal worlds, which cannot interpenetrate in imitation of physical intercourse.

It is in this manner that the prostitute is like the later Mona/Mara "who had been and would be other names, other persons, other assemblages of appendages, was no more accessible, penetrable, than a cool statue in a forgotten garden of a lost continent" (Miller, *Sexus* 210). Despite any extent of sexual penetration, there is always some unspoken element for which sex itself stands in—an unknown that sex covers. Identity, moreover, is aligned with penetrability and accessibility, such that Van Norden can be penetrated, but the women remain apart. Only in this metaphoric sense is sexual activity associated with identity, but even this still falls in line with Nietzsche's troubling of the *site* of identity. Likewise, to avoid a paradoxical situation where Mona/Mara is both penetrated and impenetrable, the reader is prompted to an ambiguous understanding of 'penetration' as both a physical conjoining and a mental connection. The Self of Mona (without addressing what such a thing might be, might specifically mean, or where it might be located) is clearly fluid and hence inaccessible (which does not mean that it must exist in some clearly defined way either), just as the prostitute's identity is unfixed depending on the exigencies of any particular situation. This is why I disagree with earlier critics of Miller's depictions of sexuality, and especially with Kate Millet's reading, which overlooks these complexities.

Impenetrability is not only apparent in these two scenes. In the opening of *Tropic of Cancer*, Miller encounters the same contradictory impenetrability during penetration in the "cabinet" (37) of a nightclub, and Millett has read this scene closely:

> He finds he can't "get it into her." With his never-failing ingenuity, he next tries sitting on the toilet seat. This won't do either, so, in a burst of hostility posing as passion, he reports: "I come all over her beautiful gown and she's sore as hell about it." In the *Tropic of Capricorn* he repeats the stunt; in *Sexus* too. It is a performance that nicely combines defecation with orgasm.... What he really wants to do is shit on her. (309)

In contrast to Millet, the reader's attention is turned to Miller's comment that "I try to *get it into* her but it won't *work*" (*Tropic of Cancer* 37; emphasis mine), which is an anticipation of Van Norden's mechanized scene where he "almost *got it in* that time" (*Tropic of Cancer* 142), but the 'machinery' likewise did not work: neither could maintain an erection. *Tropic of Cancer* was Miller's most thoroughly and carefully revised text, so the fact of repetition bears emphasis and suggests this is not a casually created link between scenes. In both cases, physical penetration seems less the issue than is the anonymity of the sex and the faulty machinery, with its associations with excrement. The latter two make the former metaphorical.

Furthermore, Millett is right to point out how this scene "nicely combines defecation with orgasm" (309); however, she does not follow this up with Miller's more pointed description of shit in the same book. Given the direct repetition, this would not seem to be a chance 'combination.' Miller's view of the excremental world is solidified when he takes "one of Gandhi's men" (*Tropic of Cancer* 97) to a brothel. In the ensuing scene, "The five of [them] are standing there looking at the *bidet*. There are two enormous turds floating in the water" (99) and the Madame is berating "Gandhi's m[a]n" (97) ferociously. As the problem is resolved, Miller muses:

> I think what a miracle it would be if this miracle which man attends eternally should turn out to be nothing more than two enormous turds which the faithful disciple dropped in the *bidet*. What if at the last moment, when the banquet table is set and the cymbals clash, there should appear suddenly, and wholly without warning, a silver platter on which even the blind could see that there is nothing more, and nothing less, than two enormous lumps of shit. That, I believe would be more miraculous than anything which man has looked forward to. (*Tropic of Cancer* 103)

Despite the number of pages between the scenes, it is clear that "the faithful disciple" (103) at least nominally refers to "Gandhi's m[a]n" (97) and that the "two enormous" (99, 103) lumps of shit are the same in both descriptions. However, the paragraph immediately preceding the 'miracle of shit' does not refer to Gandhi, but rather to "Gautama and Jesus" (103). This links the creation of the disciple to disillusionment with two dominant worldviews (lumps of shit) and belief systems that double as means to identification.

As with Millet's linking of sex and defecation, this scene takes place in a brothel and anticipates copulation, but the orgasm-defecation elision is not as *narrow* as she makes it out to be. It takes on more connotations. Miller has expanded defecation to encompass a worldview that balances how individuals interact with each other. As with the woman whose gown Miller 'soils' with sperm (37), the defecation of the young Indian (Ghandi's man) is closely tied to the relations between people and sex. Furthermore, if the reader accepts the expansion of defecation in a brothel's bidet to encompass broad social structures (which is Miller's explicit call), then the excretions from the encounter in a nightclub's closet are equally indicative of the faults in such social belief systems. I read against Millett's argument that "What [Miller] really wants to do is shit on her" (Millett 309), which elides author and narrator, and instead suggest that the metaphoric shit of their meeting indicates the same rotting flaw that Miller finds in structures such as religion. If the 'miracle of shit' applies to the "miracle which man attends eternally" (103) as a false pedestal of projected desire, then the patriarchal imagining of the idealized woman and strict heterosexual relations are equally undermined (and this is a meeting point where Millett may actually have found common ground with Miller). Millet's point is *who* gets shit on while Miller's is that patriarchal power, religious power, and gender stereotypes contribute to the same problem.

The American woman Miller ejaculates on in the toilet (*Tropic of Cancer* 36-37) is as impenetrable as Mona/Mara and the Parisian prostitute Van Norden is described with; however, while neither Van Norden nor Miller can 'get it into' their respective female mates, the excretory reappears in Miller's anal play with Van Norden, "tickling him in the rump" (142). These turns to the excretory and to the homoerotic (if not homosexual) appear as Miller's (or his text's) interventions in the discourses of enforced heterosexuality and socio-normative belief systems, and this aligns him with Millett more than she may be comfortable with. Miller certainly did not have the same awareness of gender as Millett, but contrasting Miller's non-fiction social activism against his fictional persona suggests a far larger role for irony than he is typically afforded. More to my point here, all of these problems of textual play and stable identifications point the reader again into an unresolvable provisionality, characteristic of Miller's "unknown."

This unknown of unstable sexual identities, shifting social alignments, and phenomenological distance from other subjectivities characterizes sexualities throughout Miller's oeuvre, as with Durrell's, but again, the two approach this particular unknown via differing means. Where Durrell tends to disturb identity politics more directly, Miller does so through the juxtaposition of heterosexuality with insinuations of homosexuality, but the effect is still a destabilization of fixed identifications in both cases.

iii. Durrell's Homoerotic East/West

This section moves critical discussion to the relationship between Orientalist discourse and same-sex desire, especially in the context of Durrell's revelation of colonial discourse as a screen onto which the Same is projected, and which prompts the reader to 'queerly' disrupt discreet binary pairs in the novel, such as gay-straight, East-West, Orient-Occident, Self-Other, and so forth. To pursue this end, this section identifies trends in the small body of critical literature that innovatively examines same-sex desire in Durrell's works and responds to its gay and lesbian focus by engaging with queer elements of the same texts. As a textual focus, my discussion pivots on the complex interventions in Durrell's *Monsieur* where coherent identities are disrupted along East-West and Gay-Straight boundaries. In the *Alexandria Quartet* and more overtly in the *Avignon Quintet*, transgressive sexualities offer the critic a means of informing postcolonial studies while concomitantly reflecting Durrell's critical approach to Empire and formal construction of the texts themselves.

For these topics, two passages in Lawrence Durrell's *Monsieur* are particularly striking because of how they refer to sexual indeterminacy and colonialism as issues connected by ambiguous language, and my discussion of Durrell's works in this chapter represents my integration of these two themes as elements that prompt the uncovering of the 'unknown' in sexual identity for Durrell. As the narrator, Bruce, "felt his mind stretching out towards the frontiers of love and childhood" (153) when nearing sleep, he became unable to distinguish between the touch of his male and female lovers, nor between his own homosexual and heterosexual desire. This is preceded by a moment of Orientalist performance in the text when Bruce and his two lovers are asked by their guide to take care with their use of religious terms, since a shrine they visit was "founded in memory of a great Wali... a *Mohammedan*. Here in Egypt we try never to offend religious susceptibilities" (132; emphasis mine). Since Durrell typically uses the term "Muslim" and seems to have had a basic understanding of both Arabic and Urdu, the atypical "Mohammedan" marks the speaker as a colonial and stands out as an acid joke against the stated intent to "try never to offend religious susceptibilities" (132). Even "susceptibilities" carries associations such as being prone to sickness.

Durrell lived mainly in the Mediterranean from 1935 until his death, and his extended residences include Corfu, Cairo, Alexandria, Cyprus, Rhodes, Belgrade, and southern France near Avignon. These locales are reflected in his writing, but nearly always with thematic materials that are, even now (as with Miller), considered sexually 'peculiar.' The peculiarity I pursue is the same one that I have outlined with regard to criticism of Miller's works: even with the notorious nature of Durrell's representations of sexuality, very little work has explored same-sex desire as a theme in his oeuvre, despite the rising prominence of gender studies, gay and lesbian studies, and queer theory. Moreover, all of Durrell's novels explicitly deal with same-sex desire. His three major novel series—*The Avignon Quintet*, *The Alexandria Quartet*, and *The Revolt of Aphrodite*—all have major homosexual characters or plotlines, and the *Alexandria Quartet* was even voted into the sixty-ninth position in the Publishing Triangle's one hundred best lesbian and gay novels; however, the broader category of 'queer' applies to virtually every sexual theme in Durrell's oeuvre, and especially where sexuality, colonialism, race, and gender intersect.

Preliminary critical works on homosexuality in Durrell's writings have exclusively focused on the *Alexandria Quartet*. This section expands the focus to include the complex role that homosexuality, heterosexuality, and other queer sexualities play in *Monsieur*, the first book in the *Avignon Quintet*. No work has yet addressed homosexuality in the ten novel-length works Durrell published after the *Quartet*, or more specifically Durrell's *magnus opus*, the *Avignon Quintet*. Notably, in contrast to the 550 or so articles written on the *Quartet*, only 130 have been written on the *Quintet*. More specifically, while the *Alexandria Quartet* can be read within a dialectical sense of sexualities as homosexual or heterosexual, *Monsieur* marks the turn to a more explicit gesture in Durrell's works that all sexualities are in some sense transgressive and are indeterminate or even continuously transforming, as is the Self.

This project connects the narcissistic gaze of the West into the East to the overt queerness Durrell exposes in characters who live out the colonial exercise of knowing and penetrating the exotic Other. On this basis, desire, homoeroticism, and queer theory, as well as the Self/Other binary that is dismantled in the book, reflect the indeterminacy and mutability that inform the complex structure of the *Avignon Quintet*, *Monsieur* being the first of the five volumes in the series. Additionally, studies of gender and sexuality overlap significantly in method with postcolonial studies. Lahoucine Ouzgane and Daniel Coleman go so far as to ask:

> If genders and sexualities are the products of cultural practices and institutions, as contemporary social construction theory claims, then what

> modified forms of sexualities and genders are produced or maintained in the hybrid societies of postcolonial places?
>
> But this search can be read in another direction as well: it can be approached with a view to finding out what new considerations the interrogation of masculinities [or sexual identities in general] in postcolonial locations might turn up for postcolonial studies. (par 1)

The investigation of such "modified forms of sexualities" is precisely what Durrell's text offers the careful reader.

Significantly, none of the previous studies of homosexuality in Durrell's works have acknowledged what is perhaps the most obvious evidence for the importance of this theme; all four volumes of the *Alexandria Quartet* are named for characters, and each of the named characters has a complex sexual history. The titular Justine is openly 'bisexual,' having seduced Clea, who is conveniently the titular character of the fourth volume, who later decides to explore (and experiment with) heterosexuality. Likewise, Balthazar is an openly homosexual character and narrator of central importance to all four volumes, and Mountolive's sexual history is complex and transgressive, and if not homosexual, it is at least homosocial. More specifically, the sexuality of Bruce in *Monsieur* and his refracting mirrors, Piers and Sylvie, prepare the reader for Durrell's more complex interrogation of the queer relationship between East and West, as well as problematize discrete identity boundaries: the known and familiar 'I' and the unknown or strange 'Thou' are blurred, hence disturbing how (self)identities are known in general. Moreover, without an awareness of the narcissistic mirroring of sexualities in Durrell's works, the reader is not clued in to the reflection separating the Colonizer and the Colonized, as well as the author and the fiction. In Durrell's works, the various reflections, projections, narcissistic mirrors, and duplicitous epistemological 'closets' all point to key similarities between personal and political relationships, whether they involve a couple, a trio, or whole communities. Specifically, the social anxiety surrounding homoeroticism, homosexuality, and notions of sexual 'deviance' infiltrates every level of *Monsieur* and informs the characters' relationships, the interpenetration of narrative voices, and the Imperialist dialogue between East and West.

In previous criticism, Durrell's position in Orientalist discourse has been tied to his references to sexuality, but the easy elision of sexualities with Orientalism has not been adequately questioned. This may relate to his relative exclusion from major studies on these issues. Emphasizing canonic concerns, Joseph Boone remarks "critics once seriously debated the status of the *Alexandria Quartet* as *the* masterpiece of the century," yet "Durrell's stock couldn't be lower than it is today" ("Lawrence" 354). Durrell's works are among the most complex fictional examination of Otherness; yet, they tend to receive critical attention primarily when the "dark tides of Eros" (Durrell, *Balthazar* 185) are located in the "dark-skinned Third World" (Boone, "Lawrence" 370), rather than the reverse, which is actually more often the case. The sexual misfits who make up the cast of his novels may live mainly in the Third World, but they are European and develop from Durrell's European novels. The *Alexandria Quartet* is, after all, not his most erotic work and is the only novel set outside of Europe.

In tandem with these issues in Durrell's fiction, there is a general perception that sexualities fall into two broad categories: those that are 'correct' or 'moral' and 'everything else.' There would be little resistance to describing Durrell's works as exemplifying the 'everything else' group, especially since the first group seems to exist only as an idea.

Therefore, it is justifiable to describe Durrell's transgressive sexualities as 'queer,' although this moves into a space of debated boundaries and terminologies. If, as many critics have argued, Durrell is intent on disrupting all stable identities in his novels, to the point where characters 'bleed into' one another like a washed out watercolour, then stable categories like 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' are less appropriate in this context than the indeterminate category of 'queer.'[96]

Oddly, only one article before 1999 (by an Arab scholar) contends that Durrell "undercut[s] the culture of imperialism" (Ghaly 2) and the Self-Other dichotomy "from his marginal position in the Empire" (2); this is by Salwa Ghaly from a collection mainly written in Arabic. Ghaly's sense of Durrell's irony holds up under scrutiny, and a close examination of *Monsieur* renders the issues of colonialism, race, gender, and sexuality complex and correlated—rather than clear and distinct—with an overall trend toward defamiliarizing not the Other, but the Same. This accentuates Durrell's destabilization of the Self, and given his interests in sexualities and Empire, Boone's "dark tides of Eros" in the "dark-skinned Third World" are signposts that specifically point to Durrell's *critique* of the undercurrent of reflective desire emanating from his representation of the European West.

In the same vein, the exoticism in Durrell's texts points to a *performance* of Orientalism's limitations in perception and knowledge—and the power relations therein—hence dismantling *performative* Orientalism. Beginning in 1935, this aspect of Durrell's works suggests a dissenting thread in European colonial literature. This is also why Avignon, once the center of the Christian world, becomes the *Outremer*[97] in *Monsieur*, as the title of the first chapter in the book makes obvious. Avignon, with its Palace of the Popes, historically replaced Rome as the residence of the Popes from 1305-78 and in the Great Schism it housed contested Popes for another forty years; therefore, in the *Avignon Quintet*, the city symbolizes the centre of the Western, Christian world. Durrell's intervention, however, places the major scenes set in Avignon in a chapter titled "Outremer," which undercuts the obvious juxtaposition of Christian France with Muslim Egypt—if Outremer refers to the French crusader states or lapus lazuli, it is peculiar to title the chapter set *within* France using this foreign name. This is akin to the slippage in Durrell's use of the Greek name for Corfu as a character name in "Oil for the Saint," and it shows a pattern in his works for slippage of terms, which forwards a schema related to the reader's easy acceptance of the text. In *Monsieur*, the exotic, overseas land and the alchemist's lapus lazuli is French Avignon, the centre of Christendom, yet it is juxtaposed against the Egyptian chapter titled "Macabru." Pine speculates about the origin of the name "Macabru," the title to the second chapter of *Monsieur* and the fictional Egyptian desert oasis where Bruce, Piers, and Sylvie experience their Gnostic initiation: "Macabru: it cannot have been incidental that Marcabru or Marcabrun was one of the earliest of Provencal troubadours" (*Mindscape* 432, n.22). This point has been repeated in Veldeman's assertion that "the evocation of Egypt even more strikingly suggests multiculturalism: it focuses mainly on Macabru, an oasis in the Egyptian desert. The very name of the place, which recalls the name of the famous troubadour

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[96] I loosely associate the former with the field of Gay and Lesbian Studies, the latter with Queer Theory and Sedgwick's "universalizing view" (85).

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[97] In French this can be lapus lazuli or overseas lands, while the Oxford English Dictionary renders Outremer as "The medieval French crusader states, including Armenia, Antioch, Tripoli (Lebanon), and Jerusalem. Also more generally: French-speaking regions lying across the Mediterranean from mainland France." The point is that Avignon is named for Egypt and Egypt is named for the Languedoc, hence blurring any meaningful distinction.

Marcabru, suggests a meeting between Christian and Islamic cultures" (24). Significantly, the viability of Pine's suspicion is supported by Durrell's copy of Serge Hutin's *Les Gnostiques* (Gifford and Osadetz 1-8), in which Durrell has circled the passage "'Il lie partie avec le diable—s'écrie Marcabru—celui qui couve Faux Amour'" (68). Durrell's marked emphasis on this passage in his personal copy suggests the seed that developed into the title, "Macabru." The East is, in Outremer, found only in French Avignon, while the West, in "Macabru," is only found in Egypt. Just as the West's self image reflects in the mirror of the sexualized East, so too is the homophobic anxiety of the Westerner expressed in the narcissistically constructed doppelgänger of the Easterner.

In line with this disruption of clear divisions between Orient and Occident, Boone sets up his critical investigation such that Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* reads as homophobic reaction to a sexualized Oriental Other, but the continually transforming sexualities of the characters force the reader to reevaluate the typical feminization of the colonized. Nevertheless, Boone's argument for a narcissistic mirroring process of heterosexuality and homosexuality is problematized when he describes the work as one where the protagonist's (Darley's) symbolic castration gives rise to "primarily heterosexual anxieties [that] are displaced onto homosexuality" ("Lawrence" 360). The difficulty in reading the homosexual subtext of Durrell's works in a postcolonial context resides in the complexity of narcissism for Durrell and the endless variety of doublings he creates. While Boone correctly points to the "homosexual doublings of Darley in Toto and Keats" and regards Darley's sexual quest as narcissistic self-discovery ("Lawrence" 490), he does not address the parallel mirroring that is also going on between Egypt and Europe. Furthermore, Boone lists the *Alexandria Quartet*'s "spectrum of variant sexual practices and behaviors[, which] include[s] rape, incest, nymphomania, pederasty, sadomasochism, bestiality, pornographic rings, lesbianism, female circumcision, transvestitism, and male castration" ("Lawrence" 371); however, he fails to mention that nearly the complete list describes *only* the activities of the European characters in the novel. This reflection of "variant sexual practices" in the East instead proves to be, for Durrell, quite overtly an uncovering of the preoccupations of the West, just as the heterosexual anxiety expressed by Darley toward the phallically potent Narouz or Keats reflects his own homoerotic interests rather than those of a genuine Other. The binary distinction between notions of Self and Other or variant and normal are drawn into unity in this manner.

Durrell sets up colonial discourse as a screen onto which the Same is projected, which alters the context of Orientalist discourses and same-sex desire in his works. Boone suggests much the same when he states, "The staged spectacle of Egyptian sexuality has become a reflecting glass 'inverted upon itself,' for in a world of fluid boundaries, he who gazes ultimately finds himself penetrated in turn by his reflection in the Other" ("Mappings" 85). The self-reflective nature of the Imperial power relationship defines and delimits in two directions and there is a symbiotic relationship, a mutual captivity, between the desire of the pseudo-Western narrative voice and the reflection it finds of itself in its narrative creations of Egyptian sexualities. While the process of projection is under-examined here, Boone does persuasively note, "the sensations attributed to Narouz, the 'desire engendered in the forests of the mind,' are actually projections, once again, of Darley's own psyche" ("Mappings" 90).

This notion parallels Bruce's realization in *Monsieur* that "It has done [him] good to put so much down on paper, though [he] notice[s] that in the very act of recording things one makes them submit to a kind of ordering which may be false" (171). Likewise, Durrel foreshadows the later revelation that the characters are only characters in another author's book. Bruce recognizes "so many... mirages [and] the *illusion of being fictions*" (92; my emphasis), just as he intimates the "*novel* feeling of *unreality* which had beset [him]" (10; my emphasis). He even sees his wife's "black hair with its violet blackness shining like *carbonpaper*" (17; my emphasis), suggesting her creation as one of the false orderings implicit in his own authorial act of recording, while also reminding the reader of her role as Bruce's lover's sister. Bruce concludes this series of prompts for the reader to recognize the fictional status of the work by recognizing that there are necessary illusions. Both *introspection* and *projection* partake of deception, so that in both fixed sexualities and Colonial relations, what one sees is a better reflection of what one needed to find than it is a truth. The same is true of the fiction of fixed identities. Therefore, elisions of locales in Egypt and France should not go unnoticed or without being related to the novel's theme of Oriental/Occidental relations.

In relation to the *Alexandria Quartet*, when the reader perceives Darley as anxious over his homoerotic desire for his sexual doubles, Durrell must be subsequently read as suggesting a homoerotic desire in England's narcissistic doubling of itself in Egypt. In this manner, by rendering the 'known' mysterious, Durrell challenges established norms of Imperialism, heterosexuality, and gender identity. While the Other to these norms can initially appear as a dialectical way to define the Western, heterosexual male (i.e. the Same is *not* the sexually-suspect, colonized, dark-skinned, feminized Other), in Durrell's text this Other is a narcissistic projection of the Same (the horrific other is the beloved reflection of the Same). Overlooking this projection becomes increasingly difficult as the novel progreses, and the result of recognizing it is defamiliarization of self-observation, which is further clouded by the anxiety surrounding the homoeroticism of this loved reflection. Our imperial Narcissus is entangled by the combination of his self-desire and heteronormative beliefs. In the same manner, Durrell's concatenation of homoeroticism and homophobia with Empire and East-West relations implies his recognition of the role of projection, such as in the murder of the cross-dressed Scobie by intolerant sailors from the HRS Milton, whom Baker wittily refers to as Scobie's "martyrdom" (n.pag).

This blurring of East and West, the Orient and Occident, is conspicuous in the book as a whole—Egypt quite literally becomes France, and France become Egypt. For example, in *Monsieur*, the mystical (and fictional) Egyptian locale, Macabru, is named after the French Troubadour poet Marcabrun, which situates French poetic history and yuletide in Egypt. Likewise, Eastern Gnosticism is indistinguishable from a French preoccupation with Medieval European heresy. This is much like Avignon becoming the *Outremer* while remaining inside France. This technique is also palpable in Durrell's landscape descriptions, where the "vistas of many-coloured desert" (*Monsieur* 91) in "Macabru" are described as "so like [the] fresh snow" (*Monsieur* 93) that has dominated the Yule celebrations in the chapter set in Provençe, "Outremer."[98] As landscapes, the Egyptian desert is realized through comparison to Provençal snowdrift—it is increasingly difficult to establish a basis on which to distinguish between France and Egypt in the novel.

Moreover, as I have mentioned, Durrell's creation of an unreal Egyptian site named for a French troubadour is a defining feature of his political landscape. Furthermore, when these reflections of France in Egypt (and Egypt in France) become obvious, they appear to the reader as a performance, and they have the same troubling effects as a performance of gender or 'queerness.' Hence, the East in *Monsieur* is textually tied to the West in an overt way, demonstrating Durrell's self-conscious suggestion of the inward, though inhibited, nature of the colonial endeavor. The theoretical implications of the eroticism, homophobia, and homoeroticism in this reflection of the West in its creation of East cannot be divorced from the self-conscious nature of the symbiotic relationship Durrell describes.

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[98] In this situation, dialectical relationships must be read as part of a spectrum of variation that circles in on itself, just as a mirror reflects its source. France cannot be separated from Egypt, and vice versa, yet gradations appear. Therefore, the Hegelian sense of 'dialectic' is not applicable, and the Socratic dialectic applies only insofar as it is a discourse of one (talking to oneself). In the same manner, while the West narcissistically finds itself reflected in the East, the careful reader finds these mirrors increasingly overt and self-conscious, such that the sexuality of the fictional East becomes a forum for the anxieties of the West.

To return to my initial suggestion regarding Durrell, Orientalist discourses and same-sex desire act subversively in Durrell's novel in a manner that actively disrupts accepted dialectical stabilizations of discrete identities. Representing established research, Boone argues that "Darley's voyeuristic tendencies, one recalls, are especially acute when it comes to spectacles of male sensuality: visiting Balthazar in bed with his boyfriends; walking in on Keats's newly godlike body under the shower; and... interrupting Narouz's orgasm" ("Mappings" 92). This is a more customary exploration of Durrell's representations of gay and lesbian characters. In contrast, the framework I have outlined suggests that these events in the *Quartet* mirror the homoerotic discovery of 'Sameness' in the 'Other,' which informs the narcissism of the Western 'exploration' of the body of the East in the novel. The appearance of Egypt in France and vice versa demonstrates the mirroring involved, especially when sand dunes and snow drifts blur. When this is compounded with Durrell's commonplace of seeing character as a reflection of landscape ("Landscape and Character" 156-163), the suggestion is solidified, and its queer element is then added through the trope of the mirror and sexual indeterminacy of the characters who look into their reflections in search of themselves. This 'queer' discovery of the Same in the Other makes the relationship homoerotic as the repressed contents of the Self are projected onto the Other, and this relationship is deeply troubled by performances of this mirror, such as the 'Western Arab' Nessim, whose Coptic faith brings him close enough to the Christian colonizers to seem familiar, but whose racial and political otherness keeps him apart.

Justine's bitter comment that "One always falls in love with the love-choice of the person one loves" (Durrell, *Justine* 203) likewise implies a same-sex love-object and an anxiety-promoting recognition of the reflection of desire. Given Durrell's obsessive return to "the mirror" in the text, it seems that homosexual and homoerotic desire support the political mirroring of East and West, and vice-versa, just as the reader is reminded that Nessim and Justine first see each other "in the mirror" (71) and Durrell's pivotal "multi-dimensional effect in character" is conceived by Justine while she is "sitting before the multiple mirrors at the dressmaker's" (27). If Darley, the Westerner, loves Justine, he must (by her reasoning) fall in love with her love-choice, the Easterner Nessim, who reflects Darley's projection of the censored aspects of himself. As surely as Justine is a token of the adulterous homosocial exchange of desire between men, the queer nature of such desire is intimately caught up in the mysteries of colonialism and the exchange between the West and its mirror in the East.

Hawthorne takes up this question of the 'penetrating' mirror more explicitly in order to build on Boone's argument: "Though [Darley] purports to be a Freudian, [Durrell makes him] transfer... narcissism from Freud's context, where falling in love with one's own image is the quintessential homosexual act, and makes it the grounds of [Darley's] interpretation of heterosexuality" (330). Yet, the bisexual Bruce of *Monsieur* does precisely this—he falls in love with his own reflection when he "walk[s] towards the looking-glass of the lake, eager to see [his] own reflection in it" (126), mirroring the myth of Narcissus. This is especially significant because this action follows immediately after Bruce's moment of spiritual crisis, and he becomes unable to distinguish between the de-gendered touch of his lovers Piers and Sylvie—they are simply the touch of lovers, rather than masculine or feminine exclusively. Perhaps more important is that Piers, Bruce, and Sylvie are also blurred reflections of another whole (and then refragmented) character at different narrative levels.

Hawthorne extends his argument, persuasively, claiming "the male heterosexual [in the *Alexandria Quartet*] must see himself through the homosexual's eyes in order to identify himself, a movement that places value on the homosexual by suggesting that the heterosexual lacks the ability to find his identity on his own" (333). This still implies two relatively stable and discrete identities, which would seem contextually unlikely given Durrell's continual dismissal of "the discrete human personality" (Durrell, *Justine* 196); Pursewarden even asks: "Are people... continuously themselves, or simply over and over again so fast that they give the illusion of continuous features?" (196). In their "over and over again," the clear distinction a heterosexual character identifying him or herself through a homosexual character is confused, since the reflection itself shows how the clear distinctions between the two, again like Durrell's bleeding watercolours, are blurred and overlap. Certainly by the time of the *Avignon Quintet*, the stability of straight and gay have vanished, though even in the *Alexandria Quartet* the heterosexual males show strong homoerotic tendencies and the females are almost never stable in their sexual identity.

The reader further discovers that the mirror function of the homosexual figure, which Hawthorne has also noted, is part of a general trend in Durrell's works that informs the self-identification of the West via seeing itself projected onto the East and the transformation of narcissism implicit in such a troubled (rippled) reflection. How else can the reader explain an

Egyptian 'Macabru' (the name of a French troubadour) or desert sands like European snows other than via "the [West] see[ing it]self through the [East]'s eyes in order to identify [it]self" (Hawthorne 333). While this is not quite Hawthorne's intent, East and West only find themselves in the Other in this fictional scenario. Furthermore, Bruce's narcissistic desire to run to the lake to gaze at his own reflection is also a gaze into the Other. He wants to see how his inner, spiritual experiences have transformed his physical appearance: the Other of the unknown Self that can only be seen in its reflection and that is subject to change. Most importantly, this narcissistic introspection via his reflection occurs in the Egyptian Macabru, the city surrounded by reflected oases, the city that reflects its twin in Southern France for the Western audience of Durrell's book.

Discussing how the East acts as the screen for projections of the West, Derek Gregory speaks to representations of Egypt in the nineteenth century, and it also applies to Durrell criticism: "the Orient was constructed as a theatrical stage on which the occident projected its own fantasies and desires" (Gregory 29). Durrell scholars have taken this point for granted since Manzalaoui's 1962 "The Curate's Egg" (which precedes Said's *Orientalism* by sixteen years). For instance, Gregory explores human geography and Orientalism by using Nile travel narratives, and Durrell uses the trope of such a narrative in *Monsieur*. Gregory points out:

> [Florence] Nightingale's frustration [with her descriptions of the Nile] turns not so much on the inadequacy of her descriptions as on the inadequacy of their *object*: the Egyptian landscape. It was, to her, a world turned upside down, an inversion of the ordered and Christian world of Europe. (35)

While "inversion" offers an ample opportunity for verbal play with my topic here, what is more immediately to the point is the description of Egypt as an antithesis to Europe.

In contrast, in Durrell's works the dialectical opposition of Europe and the Middle East is overtly broken down, so that Bruce's trip along the same landscape inverts Europe and shows Egypt reflecting elements of Europe back, such as Southern France and and a troubadour, while the knowledge gained in it subverts Christian Orthodoxy, hence turning the Palace of the Popes into an exotic *outremer*. Gregory draws out these themes in Nineteenth Century literature, but Durrell's text appears to anticipate or even prompt such readings and actively subverts the literary tradition that critics like Gregory examine.

Here, the reader finds the dialectics of the East/West opposition and the illusion of stable categories that such dialectical relationships invent. Distinctions between 'natural' and 'queer' seem ludicrous in Durrell's situating of characters, and East and West are blurred together in the Mediterranean blue: a washed out watercolour without clean distinctions.[99] It is important to realize that the discussion of self-identities is also complicated in Durrell's works, no matter what adjectives we attach to the pronouns, as I have already discussed with regard to Lawrence's allotropic self. This destabilization of character identities reflects the interpenetration of geographies, and the 'queer' characters that resist categorization are the ones that bring these landscapes to life. This blurring of identity is also a technique of the writing as well, such that characters are not distinct in the notebooks Durrell used to write the *Avignon Quintet*, and passages in these notebooks that are applied to one character are lifted from the notebooks and applied to another without regard to the resulting confusion of character identity. Notes for the novel are also integrated without revision in order to appear as characters' notebooks, and this notebook-like nature of the *Quintet* is apparent when it describes itself as "a book full of spare parts of other books, of characters left over from other lives, all circulating in each other's bloodstreams.... Be ye members of one another" (*Quintet* 693). There is no reality, just reality prime with each reality writing the other. Each chapter of *Monsieur* is set up as writing the others—none is primogenitor. These interactions between volumes, such that the *Quintet* appears to be written by a character in the *Alexandria Quartet*; interactions between narrative levels of reality; the transformation of one character into another; and the characters' "interpenetration" of each other are all familiar routes of access into Durrell's ideas in the *Avignon Quintet*.

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[99] This is how Durrell describes his characters in the *Avignon Quintet* in a late interview from 1986 but only published in 2004 (Goldman n.pag).

Nonetheless, the queer aspect of such 'interpenetrations' of identities has not been sufficiently explored nor has its implications on binary thinking: East/West, gay/straight, male/female, etcetera. For example, the most overt instance of "sexual desire [acting as] an unpredictably powerful solvent of stable identities" (Sedgewick 85) in the *Avignon Quintet* occurs within the characters who skirt around fixed sexual and national identities. It is in them that these 'interpenetrations' of identities occur, such that the homoerotic aspect of the Blanford/Sutcliffe relationship is caught up in their status as each other's author.[100] This bears a strong resemblance to the Pia, Trash, Livia, Constance 'interpenetrations,' where characters spill into each other and narrative lives cross between different levels of fictional realities.

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[100] For further discussion, see Ramón Plo Alastrué's "Durrell Writing about Writers Writing: Towards a Spatial Definition of *The Avignon Quintet*" (207-225). The problem is which character is only a character in the other's book, but as would be expected of Durrell, both are writing each other in someone else's.

What is clear is that the interpenetration of character identities reflects the interpenetration of geographies, such as those exemplified in Avignon and Macabru in *Monsieur*. Furthermore, it is the generally 'queer' characters who bring these landscapes to life, such as the trinity of lovers, Bruce, Piers, and his sister Sylvie, or later Blanford, Livia, and her brother Hilary, as well as her many other lovers. Durrell's extensive use of the word "interpenetration" must be noted in this context as well as his use of such complexly queer characters to illustrate it. This duet of trios (characters in threesomes) is again reflected (and queerly interpenetrated) by the three French lovers who find themselves in Egypt during World War II and who become fodder for Blanford's book. It is unclear whether the characters in *Monsieur* inspire the later story of three lovers in the same scenario in *Constance* or if they are the fiction inspired by the later reality. With time and narrative realities constantly revised, the source of a particular identity may always be found in that which it created or was created by. The reader of the *Avignon Quintet* is continually shown that it is the openly 'queer' characters who are able to cross binary identity boundaries, and it is these sexually queer characters who are aware of the pervasive nature of symbiotic interpenetrations.

As with Miller, the potential for closeting these various transgressions through heterosexist presumption is resisted by Durrell's emphasis on the queerness of his cast of characters. These characters resist the closet of heterosexist presumption more systemically than a simply gay and lesbian studies stance might. This places my argument here in conflict with previous scholarship that traces the homoerotic elements of heterosexual characters in much the same way as Sedgwick does in *Epistemology of the Closet.* For instance, Hawthorne asserts "the tendency has been to unsex Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*[, which] immediately inscribes the narrator's heterosexist presumption" (328). In fact, in conjunction with relativity and colonialism, "modern love" has been one of the most recurring themes in scholarship on the *Alexandria Quartet* since the late 1950s.

The reader also finds heterosexist presumption denied at the very outset by the Freudian epigram: "I am accustoming myself to the idea of regarding every sexual act as a process in which four persons are involved" (Durrell, *Justine* 10). The quotation is from a letter by Freud to Wilhelm Fleiss where the preceding sentences are "Now for bisexuality! I am sure you are right" (289), and Durrell's incomplete epigrammatic use of the letter is followed in by a second epigram from the Marquis de Sade. Numerous other textual instances, such as Durrell's own translations of Cavafy that are included in the text, suggest that heterosexist presumption is difficult to ascribe to the narrator of *Justine*, especially since the titular character is bisexual and the narrator is not even identified until the second volume. Durrell even 'outs' his erased allusion to Freud's reference to bisexualty saying, in an interview with Kenneth Young, that in *The Alexandria Quartet* he was "trying to illustrate the bi-sexual Eros which Freud disinterred after it had been lost, virtually since Plato" (62). Moreover, Clea, who was Justine's lover, tells the narrator "[love] is capable of appearing in an infinity of forms" (Durrell, *Justine* 130) and the narrator claims he has "often" (92) visited Balthazar and found him in bed with another man; such scenes are "natural" (92).

In view of these textual complications, Durrell's emphasis on the queerness of his characters, rather than on their gay or lesbian identity, refutes the position of 'normality' from which heterosexist presumption derives its epistemic authority. Roger Bowen raises questions that point to the homosexual as a transgressor capable of functioning under differing social rubrics. Bowen cites Boone: "Because of their demise, Toto, Narouz, Keats, and Scobie are defined... as the 'silenced signifiers of homoerotic taboo'" (Bowen 56; quoting Boone, *Libidinal* 377); however, Bowen challenges Boone on this point, and notes:

> Scobie is far from 'silenced'; his voice is appropriated after his death by both Darley and Clea, and his posthumous identity transformed.... In life and death Scobie remains the most privileged, the most autonomous, the most transgressive, and the most potent of Durrell's homosexual portraits in the *Quartet*. (Bowen 56)

As with Bowen, Durrell's texts have not reinscribed closets or silenced the homoerotic—instead, they speak it, although I do not believe the perpetuation of Scobie's ventriloquized voice is an adequate means of breaking down the closeting "of homoerotic taboo."

In addition to Bowen's argument against seeing Durrell's gay characters as the silenced signifiers of homoerotic taboo, even though Balthazar, who is "humiliated in an unrequited love affair" (56), remains a narrative voice equal to Darley's, especially in his titular volume. Darley is also poignantly humiliated by his discovery that his love affair with Justine was not even based on any genuine sexual attraction on her part. Balthazar's humiliation is not a basis for judging his importance as a character or narrator. Both Balthazar and Scobie, moreover, represent the most cosmopolitan intermingling of East and West, which suggests "he who gazes ultimately finds himself penetrated in turn, by his reflection in the Other" (Boone "Mappings" 85). It is this intermingling, which denies dialectical divisions, that more effectively privileges transgression, and undercuts the predicate of epistemological closets. As in Durrell's and Miller's discussion of Lawrence, the disruption here of the predicate reflects their rejection of the stable or even allotropic self.

Baker makes the related point that Boone's penetrating reflection is also self-exploration, and that "In Alexandria, Balthazar and Scobie openly pursue sexual contact with men; [and are] convulsed by anxiety and loathing only when the agents or functions of empire intrude in Alexandria" (3). In line with the subversion of the basis of heterosexist presumption's closet, Baker's argument supports my contention that the queer figures in Durrell's works consistently glide, fluidly, between East and West, rich and poor, or even 'masculine' and 'feminine,' as can be seen in Scobie's association with Tiresias. Only external social pressures act as the textual vehicles that complicate such movements. This fluidity, moreover, troubles identity boundaries, such as those based on location, as well as the sexual identities ascribed thereon.

In the *Avignon Quintet*, the Prince is the most obvious multilingual and multicultural character, as at 'home' in Egypt as he is in France or Britain. Furthermore, in his ambiguous sexuality—part pedophile, part heterosexual monogamist, at times assertive and at other passive and compliant, but always changing—the Prince 'queers' the binaries of 'straight,' 'natural' and 'immoral.' As Paul Lorenz has pointed out ("Quantum Mechanics" n.pag), the scene of the Prince's excursion to the brothel where he meets with children in an imitation of heteronormative domestic bliss may be perfectly innocent; nothing can be seen very clearly and no presumptions are made with regard to the potential for pedophilic content, especially with his demonstrated dedication to his wife. Durrell leaves the scene indeterminate and the reader is left to vacillate in both directions at different times, depending on his or her personal tendencies, and hence, the Prince can negotiate seemingly incompatible sexual and social identities, while concomitantly troubling the easy association of 'straight' with 'moral.'

Also, the Prince's transgression cannot be 'closeted' because the dialectic of natural-unnatural or queer-straight is subverted. The reader's encounter with the Prince denies the epistemological predicate on which presumed heterosexuality can construct a new closet around him (even if his sex acts are heterosexual at times), while concomitantly denying the easy categorization of his behaviour as homosexual, pedophilic, and so forth. Therefore, in contrast to Bowen, the autonomy of homosexual and 'deviant' voices in Durrell's novels speak to both a more lasting resistance to closeting or silencing of these figures, as well as the texts' continual undercutting of the knowledge-base for dialectical categorizations and Durrell's constant shifting of characters along a spectrum of sexualities effect this resistance.

The reader finds the same fluidity of identity in Constance who, in her bisexuality, glides from her lovers Sam, Affad, and Sylvie (who crosses fictional levels of reality), to Blanford. Constance, like the Prince or Scobie in the *Alexandria Quartet*, is one of Durrell's most independent characters, and with her Swiss nationality, she also slips between the national and geographic divisions in World War II, moving across Europe when everyone else is fixed on opposite sides of the apparently binary war (Allies versus Axis if one excludes collaborators), which is likewise fragmented into myriad conflicts. Like Scobie, her queer sexuality shows fluidity and mutability, as opposed to rigidity and incomprehension of difference. She is neither lesbian nor straight, and not specifically 'bisexual' either, but rather mutable and indeterminate in the context of Durrell's blurring of notebooks in the novel.[101] She is both Contance and the Duchess Tu Duc in *Monsieur*; her character names and identities overlap. This is akin to the sexual indeterminacy Bert Archer discusses in *The End of Gay*. A trend may be emerging where those with "extensive familiarity with the concept of sexual identity" are engaging with various kinds of sexual partners, but are deliberately not acknowledging "any concrete definition of their own [sexual] identity" (23). Like Nietzsche's disruption of the Cartesian 'I think,' where "it is a falsification of the facts of the case to say that the subject 'I' is the condition of the predicate 'think.'" (*Beyond* 24), sexual activity or even preference does not define identity. The verb 'love' may be conjugated, but the full nature of its subject is indeterminate and is subject to continuous revision.

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[101] As I have already noted, Durrell various notebooks for the *Avignon Quintet* confuse character identity, gender, and the authorial levels of reality that drive the books series' plot. Verbatim excerpts of Durrell's sketches may appear in the final novel as a character's notes for a novel, such as how *Monsieur* becomes a character's novel in *Livia*. Durrell quaries the same passages in the notebooks for different characters as well, which lends weight to his injunction "be ye members of one another" (*Quintet* 693)

For Durrell, the indeterminacy of sexual identity also extends to (or derives from) the indeterminacy of notions of the Self in general, 'I' being perhaps the greatest aporetic gap of all. Moreover, geography and Constance's movement through it demonstrates the same mutability as her sexuality. It is translated, carried across, from neutral Switzerland to war-torn France and other locations throughout Europe in World War II, buffeted from one imposed identity to another (neutral, resistance, collaborator, and so forth) but without ever taking up such labels as self-identifying. Likewise, her sexuality is carried across partners of diverse race, gender, and nationality in the same manner, all of which bespeaks the relatedness of these descriptive disruptions of stable identities to the instability of the language in which these descriptions are constructed: each categorizing name placed on Constance silences the range of difference rather than elucidating them, and hence they do not work and become unstable. The narrative disruptions mirror the disruptions inherent in the use of language as the medium in which to enact identity. Constance's sexual identity (or self in general) is an empty category, while her sexual activity is transitory, and hence 'queer.'

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of Durrell's creation is the freedom of his queer figures and the way that he associates their national and cultural 'interpenetrations' with their sexual indeterminacies, and vice versa. The indeterminacy of binary structures for sexuality and nationality is further reflected in Durrell's general destabilization of mutually exclusive categorizations by developing transitions from one set to its supposed opposite or by creating shared features among sets. This theme is even played out in the mystical explorations in the text, where the past and present 'interpenetrate.' Durrell describes the historical Cathars and Templars of Provençe in terms of sexual deviance, which privileges indeterminacy and prevents closeting by subverting fixed classificsations. The Cathars and Templars are surrounded by rumors of homosexuality, which in turn inform the queer nature of their religiosity. Durrell's concomitant references to the Baphomet myth highlight the androgynous elements of the text (Wasserstrom 446).

The Gnosticism explored by Durrell, which he ties to these two religious groups, also appears both in Egypt and in France, blurring the potential for distinctions between nations and cultures. Moreover, the pagan Grail Quest of the *Avignon Quintet* takes root in Avignon, the former city of the Popes, rather than in Jerusalem, where the historical Templars were founded, and the Gnosticism of these Grail Knights troubles the Christian iconography of the quest theme. In the same manner, Christianity leaps from Gnosticism, which in turn finds its home in Christianity, all brought to fruition by the bending of national distinctions, and carried out by characters that are queer and transgressive. The flexibility of boundaries and identities cannot be demarcated along lines of national identity, religious affiliation, sexuality, or gender, and therefore, interpenetration (interfertilization) is the thematic key.

Durrell's systematic destabilizing of identity politics, even to the point of the 'death of the subject' (in a Nietzschean sense), anticipates aspects of queer theory.

With regard to the *Alexandria Quartet*, Hawthorne argues that "In many cases, characters... purposely distort existential actuality to hide truth; that is, they purposely construct 'closets' to conceal sexualities" (332). This is not exactly the case. The skepticism implicit in Durrell's texts, which is most explicit in the *Avignon Quintet*, purposively breaks down epistemological closets and is skeptical of *any* notions of "existential actuality." In a book made up of spare parts with and characters that are 'members' each other (*Avignon* 693), the interpenetrating narrative layers disintegrate the identity-boundaries of closets just as they trouble sexual identities. When fixed identity categories become superfluous or overflow, such epistemological closets cease to function.

By disrupting the reader's heterosexist presumption, the various sexualities in Durrell's and Miller's novels point to a pattern of exploiting pre-existing erotic or exotic stereotypes that give the reader what he or she anticipates but then disrupting these stereotypes so that they no longer work. The opportunity to impose these expectations only occurs in a manner that ultimately brings readers back to face their anticipations *as* stereotypes and their own readerly creations, rather than discoveries. The mask of the familiar covers the gap of the 'unknown' in the instance, but its insufficiency is slowly demonstrated, which may open the reader to new possibilities. The gap acts as a cynosure both in drawing attention to itself and also by being a guide that focuses attention. The reader may only have what he or she brought to the text, but the gap has the capacity to disturb. Sexual identity, as a stable category of knowledge, and heterosexist presumption's addition of missing titles, ultimately become untenable as the reader encounters progressively subversive forms of what are, initially, ostensibly discrete categories of sexual activity. The reader's presumption provides a category which is then rendered insufficient.

Nonetheless, as critical responses to Durrell and Miller demonstrate, readers can cling tenaciously to their anticipations, even when they fly in the face of overt statements, such as Miller's scene with Van Norden, or the presence of complex ambiguities and aporia in the text. Instead of closets, Durrell's *Avignon Quintet* and *Monsieur* offer a 'Chinese box,' as he repeatedly described the text[102], where each successive box within a box reveals yet another facet of identity (national, cultural, gender, or sexual). However, in the pursuit of the essential "I" or the primary container (the final empty box with no further contents), the only truth uncovered is the mutability, reflections, and symbiosis of identities—this point is equally viable for both Miller and Durrell.

Like a box within a box, or a Russian nesting doll within another nesting doll (a familiar trope for Durrell critics who try to make sense of the progressive layers of reality in his novels), the characters in *Monsieur* are all derived from one another, but have neither a final discrete container on the outside or a core apart from their symbiosis. The unveiling is without end, since each layer of identity is constructed rather than based on the lie of the discrete ego, which is "only a supposition, an assertion" (Nietzsche, *Beyond* 83). Moreover, this interpenetration of sexual identities is necessarily part of the symbiosis of place, like Macabru and Avignon. Back in the space of Gay and Lesbian Studies, Sedgwick points out, "the deadly elasticity of heterosexist presumption means that... people find new walls springing up around them as they drowse" (68). While her political argument still holds as true today, for the texts under discussion, the elasticity with which Durrell's characters move between different worlds and transgress identity boundaries is of a different epistemological order than Sedgwick's (well justified) argument about the closeting perpetuated by heterosexist presumption, since the confusion elicited by the elasticity of the identities of the characters disallows presumption.

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[102] For example, see Goldman's "An Interview with Lawrence Durrell: Pennsylvania State University" (n.pag).

The reception of Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* acts a foil to this reading of Durrell, where the presumption of heterosexuality effectively covers overtly homoerotic materials for those critics who are looking for precisely this. *Tropic of Cancer* very effectively breaks down such presumptions among readers who are careful enough to find the overt elements of the text by directly transforming the paragon of heterosexuality into an indeterminate, or at least ambiguous, elision of heterosexual and homosexual categorisations. Likewise, Durrell's novels offer a systemic transgression that works against the politics of the closet and pervasively breaks down the epistemological foundations for heterosexist presumption itself. *All* his characters' sexualities are transgressive and therefore queer, while remaining mutable, whether or not they are momentarily heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise artificially classifiable. One of Miller's and Durrell's primary themes, which they discuss repeatedly in their letters, is the death of the stable and discrete ego, as many critics have repeatedly pointed out since the 1960s. Just as France appears *in* Egypt, or Gnosticism *in* Christianity, Bloshford appears *in* Blanford, and Sylvie *in* both Livia and Sylvaine. Miller plays the same trick on his reader, with homosexual (or at least homoerotic) descriptions occurring within the most intensely heterosexual textual moments; the same elision of identities is also intensified by Miller in his polysignification of Mona, Mara, and June in the *Rosy Crucifixion*, such that the discrete categorisation of her as straight or lesbian is as impossible as rendering her into a single discrete character. In the same manner, homosexual, bisexual, heterosexual, and other queer identities interpenetrate each other as the fixity of identities dissolves.

CONCLUSIONS

Knowing the Unknown

I have taken a Grand Tour across the critical landscapes of Durrell's and Miller's works, all in search of an elusive site on which to plant my rose-coloured glass to get the right view of their 'unknown.' The trouble with taking such an approach is training the eye to see what is missing rather than the view itself—we typically define a view by what is *in* it, not by what its frame suggests yet excludes. While I first began to read these authors in search of a good mystery novel, where the 'whodunnit' element is typically resolved in an unambiguous manner by the end of the work, I must now leave this framework for my own conclusions. Durrell's and Miller's unknown points to exactly those moments that open a good mystery but that refuse to allow for a resolution of the problem: where a corpse should be, the reader finds only a suggestive opening.

It is this unresolved problem that turns attention back the function of the gap and, thereby, to a method for reading their works. The aporetic gap is a cynosure, drawing attention to itself yet acting as a beacon that draws the reader in the direction of self-reflexivity. We have seen the 'unknown' as a gap paralleling Iser's blank, which turns attention to the reading process: something very much in line with Durrell's reframing of Miller's use of the term. Moreover, with landscape and locale being major thematic foci for both authors, the gap returns as a blank yet readily inscribed space—the absences in the landscape specifically allow for the reader's inscription of his or her expectations based on national identity and national stereotypes. This, the most overtly political gap, demonstrates both authors' manipulation of the reader through juxtaposition of these gaps against colonial and bellicose materials. Colonial power and warfare sit next to the strongest moments of the reader's gap filling, making it anything but apolitical. This, in turn, leads to the 'unknown' in literary characters, reflecting the absences we, as readers, are expected to fill in. While still focused on the reader and his or her role in 'gap-filling,' it prepares the ground for another type of expectation: heterosexist assumption. As sexualities are likewise tied to notions of the Self, which is caught up in the questions of literary character, the 'unknown' emerges as a space for the reader to introduce his or her own materials, yet it destabilizes these introductions. The reader brings his or her personal 'something,' but the text disturbs it, so we do not leave the text with quite the same notion as we had when we first began reading. The text's notions were not imposed on the reader, but the reader's additions have been troubled. Much like Durrell's and Miller's interest in Lawrence, we may come to Durrell and Miller with a diamond only to leave with its allotrope: coal.

Consequently, rather than simply pursuing the noun attached to an adjectival 'unknown' (the unknown word, for instance, that is cut by a censor's pen), we are sent on a chase for *how* this gap functions and in what contexts its functions are developed. Rather than filling or resolving the gap, we are made to ask what the absence in the text allows the reader, and how this absence draws attention to itself, making the reader's allowances the focus of attention. Furthermore, what topics and issues important to scholarship do these gaps appear in relation to?

For the latter, the 'unknown' relates to the established approaches to Durrell's and Miller's works: landscapes and geographies, problems of selfhood and identity, and sexualities. This list could be continued, perhaps most profitably as an exploration of allusion in both authors' works, but these three areas suffice to outline the significance of the 'unknown' to their works and its significance to scholarship. How the gaps and absences become aporetic is shown in the return to the problem, the moment when the reader is called on to fill a pressing openness in the text. For instance, when ambiguous or unlabelled sexualities are collapsed (concretized) into a single notion, the reader has made known Durrell's and Miller's 'unknown' in its first instance, yet it also acts as a cynosure. Rather than simply allowing a reader to find what he or she set out to find, the function of these gaps has a second component where attention is drawn to this process by return. The ambiguity, blank, or aporia is repeated in a way that disallows the first, likely resolution, and hence the reader is made more aware of the process involved. Beginning with Miller's discussion of self-discovery through the unknown (such as in the parapraxis, the Freudian slip), Durrell reframed the term in order to grant readers a way to read the form of Miller's works, form often being Durrell's critique of Miller. The reader is thereby guided to become a self-conscious participant in the text.

With regard to sexualities, this function of the 'unknown' involves the gap around names for stable sexual identities, such that the reader's own heterosexist presumption (or the critic's) eventually becomes insufficient, leaving only the gap. In its return, the absence of stable titles is reinforced, and the gap is more forcefully asserted. In a contemporary sense, we would call this a queering of the text—binary or stable divisions of sexualities are rendered insufficient for accommodating the range of practices and self-conceptualizations. This queer text, then, must confront the heteronormative readings it has received, pointing to the process whereby the reader was given the opportunity to introduce a resolution to an ambiguity or to fill a gap. Hence, Miller and Durrell occupy a position among critics as having produced quintessentially heteronormative works, a position the text themselves resist when their 'unknowns' are reexamined. The reader is then left facing his or her own heterosexist assumption, and the didactic function of the 'unknown' is revealed.

In a more prominent way, identity and selfhood become equally suspect, with ambiguities arising over names, contradictions appearing in the text, and even more absences. Whether a character remains unnamed or pronouns are rendered as empty spaces on the page (Miller, *Sexus* 28), what the reader finds in the   again becomes a matter of the 'unknown.' This is the substance of Miller's gaps in identities, and it augments the narrator's discourses on selfhood, sometimes rendering them ironic and in others granting them more weight. For Durrell, likewise, the absence of a self is the problem, such as in the I/Io who revolts in *The Revolt of Aphrodite* yet remains an object rather than a subject. Rather than pursuing some essential, true Self, Durrell's works surround such attempts with gaps. Much like the "Anniversary" tribute to T. S. Eliot, where the absence of a grammatical subject troubles the discussion of allusion and gestures to Eliot's 'objective correlative,' Durrell puts aside the problem of the individual emotion and its implicit tie to a personal interiority by denying the subject—the passive voice becomes the rule. Actions are carried out, ideas are thought, and emotions are felt, but the subject remains elusive and the reader is made aware of his or her insertion of a subject.

In these matters, however, landscape remains the quintessential instance of the unknown, whether gaps in the landscape become a part of the text or the text leaves empty spaces that demand the reader's contribution (as I suggested previously, consider the role of missing landmarks, such as the Parthenon's pediment, the famous Elgin Marbles, or the

Manhattan skyline in film after September 2001). Miller's well in Mycenae takes on a host of associations, not the least of which being a potential allusion to Mycenaen shaft graves, but this is only through juxtaposition against the adjacent materials, with ambiguity and absence surrounding this scene. Durrell's Corfu works similarly, with descriptions of the locale hovering around richly allusive and politically charged contents but without allusions being made.

What we learn of the 'unknown' then relates to its function rather than its contents—rather than seeking a hidden truth or mystical revelation, Durrell's and Miller's 'unknown' prompts attention toward its function, which is to slowly concentrate attention on the mirror of the text to the reader's lamp while reading. In such a scenario, one does not see the mirror, one sees the lamp, and the trick of these texts is to slowly dissociate the one from the other—the mirror remains without an image of its own, but it can slowly come to be recognized as a blank rather than as the image it returns.

However, this 'unknown' is not valuable as a general notion for literary study, *per se*. It is akin to Eco's "open" text, although the gap would seem to press on the limitations he ascribes to the boundaries of interpretations—nonetheless, it is as a kinship between Durrell and Miller, and as a method for approaching their oeuvres, that the 'unknown' gains its primary value. With regard to scholarship, the most significant contribution of the notion of the 'unknown' is the connection it sustains between Durrell and Miller, as a common concern both shared, and as an approach that augments the complexity of their works. Moreover, what makes the commonalities between Durrell and Miller so important in this context is that both put the reader back on his or her own resources—they send us away, on all grounds (the Self, character, locale, sexuality), leaving the ground pulled out from beneath us. That, ultimately, is what art is about for Durrell and Miller, and the 'unknown' goes to the very heart of their art.

Yet, with regard to the Truth of my subject, both have fallen silent, exiting the scene, but to return to the allusion that prompted the *Hamlet* correspondence from which my title derives, "The rest is silence" (V.ii 311). Silent as the grave, the moment of rest is a silence, but like the rest in a musical language, the gap of it prompts a response. This is but one.

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